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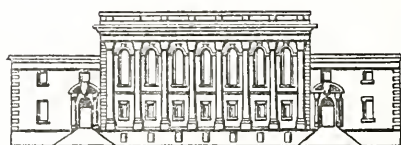
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SWEET BRIAR, VIRGINIA

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The Brambler

SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE, SWEET BRIAR, VIRGINIA



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THE BRAMBLER

SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE, SWEET BRIAR, VIRGINIA

OCTOBER, 1955

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STEPHANIE BUTAN

COMEDY AND OSCAR WILDE

IT IS strange that people will see their shortcoming quicker if they are made to laugh at them, rather than to ponder them. A feeling of hope usually accompanies comedy, while only a feeling of doom follows tragedy. Perhaps it is because comedy injects a certain lightness into us, and with this buoyancy we feel that we can reform even the seemingly impossible; while tragedy leaves us disillusioned and with the idea that no power can change the inevitable. We cannot solve a problem if we attack it gloomily, but if we attack the same problem with the memory of laughter still fresh in us, we have a very good chance of success. I imagine Wilde believed "comedy is an antidote to error." His seemingly flip remarks were not made solely to amuse his dinner companions. He hoped that someone would see the flaws of his society through one of his witticisms. Wilde was not a reformer; he merely presented his society's shortcomings and hoped that someone, with the delightful memory of a quip still in his mind, would undertake to change the solemn institutions which had long since lost their value to humanity.

Wilde seems to romp through the entire play of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, but he manages to knock us over quite frequently during his sport. Wilde's puns and paradoxes were in keeping with the decorous gaiety of his time, as we read them today, we realize that Wilde's wit went deeper than the majority of his contemporaries imagined. His paradoxes, although delightful, are painfully true. We must admit that a paradox such as "He has nothing but looks everything. What more can one desire?" holds true even to this day. And although we pretend to admire a woman's character, her virtue, and her intelligence, most men still believe that "The only way to behave to a woman is to make love to her if she is pretty and to someone else if she is plain." We invent reasons for our actions: we believe them to be perfectly valid, but when we come across a remark made by Wilde, we are forced to realize that we did not construct a reason, but an excuse. Wilde makes us see our true selves, and this disturbs us. Clichés are things everyone accepts, but Wilde can turn a cliché inside out, and we are forced to accept it. No one can refute such inverted clichés as: "The truth is rarely pure and never simple. Modern life would be very tedious if it were, and modern literature a complete impossibility." or "You don't seem to realize, that in married life three is company and two is none." Wilde's puns are wonderfully witty; for example, a mark made by Miss Prism, "A misanthrope I can understand—a womanthrope, never!", is very brilliant on the surface and brilliant when we think about it. The very title of the play startles us; when the title is compared with the outcome of the plot, we wonder if the things we take seriously are really important or are they, in reality, just the trivial things? In short, we start to wonder about the ancient, unanswerable question, "What is reality?" and is there really an importance in being earnest?

THE DEER



"LISTEN, old man, go back to the fire." The cold whispered in the grey hairs of his ears.

"The wind is wet. The fog will creep up your sleeves and slip past the buttons of your jacket to steal your body." Silence and the sound of silence that is only felt echoed the cold warning.

"It is not too late. You have not come so far that you would miss the path." The pines hissed. "Listen to the water in your moccasins. You can hear it, but all feeling of it is gone. Are you so old then, that half an hour on the track can numb your blood and pant your breath?"

The old man moved stiffly through the thorn and underbrush. His hand that pushed aside the brambles was dried and withered. Beneath his jacket his bare chest was hollowed like an empty pod. His eyes saw every broken stick. A field mouse had stolen the berries from the bracken. A fox had paused beneath the gorse to bite a knot of mud from between his toes. The old man saw them. He smelled their fur; he heard the fox's high yap-yurr; he fled down the rock crevice with the mouse. He saw everything; he was everywhere. Yet in his ancient wisdom he cared for none, none but the deer.

He picked up their spoor where the creek lay sluggishly against the lower meadow. Here the deer had made their bedding grounds. He touched the dripping leaves. The deer had not been gone long. Even now the shoots and creepers were springing back from their release of the warm hot bodies of the deer. Somewhere a leaf let go and spiraled to the ground. The old man went slowly through the thicket, breaking the spiders' webs that hung from the tree bark. He moved noiselessly, listening above him to the oak trees stretching their creaking limbs, yawning and turning in their deep slumber.

"They are gone." The thought whispered in his head, pressing behind his eyes. "The deer have gone to the pool below the rapids. They will hunt the lichen and the weed-moss."

"Hurry, old man. You will miss them."

"Miss them." The cold brook stones echoed the wet wind.

Down through the grey meadow, down the corridor of hoary birches he hurried, pushed on by the whisper. Faster, faster he ran, knowing nothing of the thorns that tore at his feet, that tripped his stumbling heart.

"You will miss them. Hurry!"

He ran on a shimmering quilt of air. Before him the moisture rose from the surface of the water that drowned the grass.

"Be quiet, fool. They will hear you. The shy deer-people will hear you. "Be quiet." Brown twigs shrieked under his hastening feet.

Then the shadows of the willows hid him. The heavy shade gave him pause to tremble with his exertion. He was in time.

The shivering leaves grew still. The rivelets hushed their empty mouthings. Even the disrespectful insects ceased the sloughing of their wings. All were quiet.

The deer were coming.

The motion of their coming slid before them. Their soft muzzles breathed green ripples on the pale pond. In the earliness of the morning the mist was rising. It reached as high as their haunches, and their smooth wet backs swam above it. Wet antlers weighted the young bucks' heads, but the does went lightly. They stood gently in the half-light of the fog, formless, silent.

They cropped the curling ferns, flicking their tails and shaking the moisture from their restless ears.

Then they were gone.

No waking leaf marked their passage. No shaking elder pointed. The old man waited.

"Is this all? Is there no more?"

The hurrying insects answered. "This is all. There is no more."

The old man nodded wearily. His eyes dulled. A brown snail crept slowly up a reed. He was too busy plodding to read the question in the old man's gentle touch. Only the wind took pity on his sorrow, and rustled the cat-tails lightly by the stream, and whispered, "Someone comes."

The deer were gone, and the insects hummed, and the stream babbled softly to itself. Yet someone was coming. The old man felt it in the tips of his fingers. He felt it in the ache of his knees.

"Who comes?" he cried in the helplessness of his faded limbs. "Who comes?"

"No one comes."

"The young and the beautiful have gone. The fleet have come and gone."

"Now no one comes."

But the wind called softly through the braken, and the shadows moved, and the shade moved, and someone brushed by the cat-tails. Slowly, stiffly, an ancient buck stepped through the mist that twined about him. His coat was long and brittle. He was flecked with white, and his pinched muzzle was silvered. His wise eyes looked out at the gray-green morning and found peace in the slow dropping of the water from the leaves and in the merciful shielding of the fog. His antlers were nude of brow tines, and though their beam was wide his prongs were crumpled. He

moved his head slowly, balancing his rack like a king whose crown was weighty. By the stream he paused in stately dignity.

The old man saw the stag well, and in the seeing of him his joy began a song, and in the singing of it the old man grew strong.

"They have come and gone. The beautiful young ones have come and gone. We are left. We are the last, you and I, old one."

The silent song stretched taut between them, an intangible string that held the stag motionless.

"We are crippled by the burden of our years, and the cold engulfs us, and the tools slip in our hands, and the stones roll from under our feet, and in the frantic pounding of the chase we are lost behind. You know, Wise One. You know how the bounds leap higher and fall shorter, and the herd flees on and on and on into the darkness. Go well, Wise One. Hold your crown high and be secure in the peace of solitude. Leave the strong young alone, and be an island, lonely. Loneliness is only a shadow. It is the uselessness that can't be borne. Stay well, Old One. Stay well."

The old man rose. For a long moment they saw each other within the other's eyes. Then the stag turned slowly, and with unhurried dignity faded into the white silence.

The cold hungry wind licked at the underside of the leaves. It drank of the thin warmth of the old man's body, and as he crossed the meadow he pulled his sleeves down to cover his wrists, and hugged the cloth tighter, and turned his face to the town, and went down again to the people.

ANONYMOUS.

Class of '55

THEREIOMYCIN

HAND of God sifts and lets fall opiate upon shivering earth.
Restless land sucks at release and grasps
The sky with skeleton fingers, shaking for more.

Scalpel had laid bare the bone and gut to naked reality.
Taut the tendons of water connecting land and twisted rock-spine, were
Tense the people shuteyed against stark etchings with no shadows in life.

Sky and earth meet and melt, mingling with no sharp hurt
Of eye which sees and sleeps with quiet of release in peace,
While soft He sifts and blankets and obscures,
Soothing and smoothing; smoothing and soothing earth-brow.

The Strangest of These

THEY were not so much a family as a group of people who had to live together, like educated shadows, in the almost-slums of Brooklyn, near Fulton Street. They were an island to themselves except Pete Trace who chose to be a part of the neighborhood.

His sister, Sandra, had gone to my High School and in senior year she won a scholarship to Barnard. I was going to Mount Holyoke. We sat together at commencement and promised to write each other.

When I gave a party, spring vacation of freshman year, Sandra came, with a plaid scarf around her neck and her older brother, Frank, as an escort. We were now part of a college crowd and where we had once spilled lemonade and crunched potato chips on the oriental rugs, we stood and held Manhattans, showed off our sophisticated laughter, and casually mentioned affairs at Yale, Williams and Princeton. I cannot remember much about Frank at that party except that Sandra had made him wear his military college uniform and that he watched me constantly as I danced with others, introduced people to Mother, and tried to see that the cliques did not show too much.

Later, after I had come home for the summer, I dated him frequently. It never occurred to me to ask some of my friends to come with us and I never took him to a party. We would go for walks along the Brooklyn Promenade, have dinners in the village and go to little foreign films. On the way home we would stop at a little lonely restaurant for coffee and ice cream. Although there never seemed to be more than two or three couples there at a time, and though we went there every week, the waiter never remembered us.

Summer beach parties came into vogue. Sandra and I double-dated with many of my friends and one night, in late August, I came home, to her house, after a party. I spent the rest of the weekend there. I had never seen her house before that.

It is a peculiar thing to walk into a different life for a period of time . . . to be a part of something and then able to walk away with nothing but the connected bunch of memories that a past must carry; and so Pete, Frank, Sanda and the others are only pieces of strangeness now, lost from my contact when the weekend was over.

I live in Brooklyn too, but the fifteen minute subway ride between the stolid and well-kept brownstone homes on my block and the noisy, shabby ones near Fulton Street, creates a difference. It is a consciously maintained social difference between people who ride the same subways, shop at the same stores and are a little afraid of each other. Brooklyn is like that.

Sandra and I arrived at her house at two a.m. that night. Our hair was damp and stringy and our jeans were sandy. Although it was late, little children played in the street. My date looked around strangely as I got out of the car. He lived on my block.

There were red and gold zebras on the hall wallpaper and the big doors to the living room were ragged with peeling paint. A light showed two little rugs not so much on but cluttering the once good hardwood floor. An ornate fireplace, formerly white, faced me as I stood in the doorway; and there were books, hundreds of dull black, red and green bindings, lining three walls. I stepped inside the room and looked at the hand-carved mahogany chairs. I knew why Mother does not like the word "sofa"; that sprawling maroon thing seemed to fit the word.

"Are you hungry?" I heard Sandra ask from behind me. "Let's have some cheese and crackers."

It must have been hard to stop my fascinated staring, but I remember that we went down the clattery stairs to the kitchen which, as in many unremodelled brownstones, was in the basement, left over from the days of servants.

"Hi Frank," Sandra said as we saw him playing solitaire at the table. "Mother still up? Is there anything around to eat?"

"She's upstairs reading," he answered, not looking up from the game. "Did you all have a good time?"

"Only two years in a Southern college and he thinks he has to have an accent," Sandra commented, as she rummaged through the refrigerator. "Is Pete in yet?"

"Yeah," called a sullen voice from the bedroom adjoining the kitchen. "You won't catch me running around this time of night."

"Julie's here for the weekend," she called. "Want to come out and say hello?"

"To one of your college pals? Thanks but no thanks," was the answer.

"Pete's not the friendly type," Frank said coldly.

I watched them, not quite sure of what to say . . . feeling like a stone statue, a gritty one. Sandra put some food on the table, took a handful of crackers and went up to talk to her mother. I sat down across from Frank and played with a spoon. There were fruit flies on a dish of peaches in the middle of the table. I wanted, right then, to go home; to take off my salt-stiff jeans and sit for an hour, in a bathtub.

"What've you been doing lately?" asked Frank.

"Nothing much. Oh I've been helping Dad at the office this week but nothing really special."

"Girls like you shouldn't work in the summer. You sit on beaches, play golf or go on trips, don't you?"

"Well, we usually go on a trip," I said and then smiled. "All right, you've caught me. I'm a spoiled brat still chewing on my silver spoon."

"Not so much that, Julie, just lucky," he answered. "Sandra said you were coming tonight. I waited."

"Well then, this is sort of a late-date. I've never had one before. I'm impressed."

"I bet," he replied and went on with his solitaire.

Frank confused me. He was so abrupt at times. At that moment I felt like a silly child trying to match wits with a brick wall.

"It's almost three-thirty," I said, after a while. "Is Sandra coming down again or should I try to find my way up alone?"

"She'll be back. She has a few manners tucked away in her arty little brain."

He had not looked up from his cards. I sat and studied a watercolor above the kitchen fireplace. The glass needed washing.

"I think I'll go up now though," I commented. "I'm awfully tired."

"I'll walk you to your room," he offered. "It's not too simple to find."

At the door to my room, he turned and faced me, putting his hands on my shoulders and looking down into my eyes for a long while. Then he bent and kissed me, just missing my mouth.

"I was wondering when you'd get around to that," I said fliply and went inside. Frank went back down to Pete's voice and solitaire.

Mrs. Trace was in the kitchen when Sandra and I came down for breakfast the next morning. A hot breeze trembled the dotted swiss curtains at the window. In loud, tearing voices, mothers called children back onto the sidewalks. Someone had turned a hydrant on. Squeals and shouts indicated a raucous enjoyment of this summer fun until the police would come by and turn it off.

Mrs. Trace was sitting at the table correcting papers. A colorless, thin woman with a worn face and dark brown hair still trying to depend on last year's permanent, she lit a fresh cigarette from the smoking, quarter-inch stub of the last.

I have always felt that she could have been born forty-six years old, in the tired light of early morning, and assigned to her children. She taught at Brooklyn College, supported her family and a sister-in-law who did social work in the daytime and drank at night. She had brought Frank, Sandra and Pete up on book psychology until they were ready for high school and then had left them to choose their own mental environment. Each fact of her life, as I had heard it, seemed passed through a strainer so that color and adventure were lost. She deserved nothing, owed only money and accepted life as one must accept a dull day.

"Nice to meet you, Julie," she said, smiling vaguely in my direction. "Sit down and have some breakfast." Then she set her cigarette down and went on correcting a pile of laboratory experiments.

Frank and Pete walked in and then Mrs. Riggs who stood by the window, drank a cup of coffee and went off to her social work and to buy her bottle for the evening.

"Hi, blond girl," Pete said, sitting down beside me. "You the Julie Frank's aching over?"

Pete surprised me. Not as tall as his older brother, he was gracefully built and wore the white T-shirt and blue trousers that is as much a uniform in Brooklyn as dungarees are on a farm. He had cold eyes, a cynical smile and was the type every girl wants to take home and reform, in a way.

I felt trapped in his eyes, parts of me at a time. Then he turned to Frank, disregarding my body the same way he disregarded my thoughts as he looked at me.

"Dodgers're playing here today. Wanna go with us?"

"Wtih you and your crowd, to sneak in without paying and steal hot dogs for the girls you pick up? No thanks kid," Frank looked at me and smiled uncertainly, then added: "Besides, Julie's here."

I smiled back at him.

Mrs. Trace squashed out her cigarette in the ashtray and stood up. She finished the last part of her coffee and said:

"Bye, children. I've an afternoon lab today so don't expect lunch. I don't much like these summer school rush classes."

Picking up a brown suede handbag that was lying on the top of the washing machine by the door, she turned and added:

"Pete, please don't stay out too late tonight. The police aren't giving you any leeway after last week." Then she left.

"For God's sake!" Pete shouted, getting up and going over to the window. A big collie dog crawled out from under the sink and rubbed the boy's leg. "You'd think I was a kid or something." Pete muttered to the curtains.

"Well?" Sandra replied.

"Lay off me, will you?"

He walked out of the room. The dog trailed after him.

"Damned kid'll break Mother's heart," Frank commented. Sandra put another piece of raisin bread in the toaster.

"I went to Coney Island last week," I offered, trying to change the subject. "Nearly screamed my head off on the rollercoaster."

"Why go on if you're going to be that scared?" Frank asked.

"I don't know," I replied. "I don't get scared exactly. I just want to make a lot of noise. I like feeling as if I'm all ringing inside and someone is forcing sandpaper down my throat. It's a logical place to let loose."

"I've never liked rollercoasters," he replied. "They're a stupid manufactured way of throwing emotions out so that everyone can see them."

"That's probably why I like them." I answered, watching Frank put butter on his toast. "It's a lot better than getting mad at someone or letting yourself feel terribly unhappy. People ought to have their own personal rollercoasters so that they won't make such goons out of themselves when they get angry. Emotions are all thrown away when you get off."

"What do you know about emotions?" he asked.

Frank and I went for a walk that afternoon. Many of our dates had been spent in that manner. We talked a great deal about ourselves. I can remember telling him all sorts of little insignificant things I had done or said. He encouraged me and by August I was inventing a completely different person, and Frank had fallen in love with me. It was a jealous love and therefore very flattering. However, though he was suspicious of everyone I dated, constantly making me reassure him that I would not forget him, or leave him, he never asked me to stop dating others and he never questioned my reasons for breaking a date.

We stopped in at the restaurant that afternoon and, as we were sitting in the dim light, Frank brought out the large envelope that he had been carrying with him. He handed it to me, apologizing:

"I did it as an experiment . . . to see whether or not you could fit into the picture, how you would look if you hadn't been born right . . . how you'd have to look and be before I had the right to touch you. You can tear it up after you look at it."

I didn't want to look at the picture here. I did not want to have to see it until I was completely alone. For some reason or other, I felt ashamed of it, ashamed for him; but I took the sketch out and glanced at it. It held my attention.

The picture was drawn from memory. I was wearing the jeans and sleeveless blouse that I had had on the night before. My hair was falling in my eyes. However, he had drawn me sitting on the curb in front of his house. I was barefoot, my lipstick was worn, Brooklyn fashion, over my lipline and he had put a chain around my ankle. It was, nevertheless, a good likeness and a strong picture . . . except for the eyes. They slanted a bit and yet were not hard. They were afraid.

"Thanks Frank," I said, putting the picture back into the envelope and putting that on the bench beside me. "You're a good artist, I think."

"It's not good, Julie. I can't seem to get the face right and that's the only part that really has to be you, except for the mouth, I mean. It's the third picture I've drawn and I still can't see your face."

"It's right in front of you," I offered, teasingly. "It has been for an awfully long time, you know."

At that moment I felt that, if he would lean over and kiss me, I would fall in love with him. I could kiss him back and close my eyes and then not have to look at him. I felt that, if he made me fall in love with him I would never have to see him again, that I could stop looking for what was really in him because nothing would matter except that I was in love.

"Don't tease me, Julie," he said and got up to pay the cashier.

Pete and three other boys were sitting on the front steps when we got to the house. They didn't move aside as we tried to go up to the front door.

"Look who's here," Pete said to his friends. "Look at what you get to make out with when you go to college. Say hello to Julie, she's a friend of my sister's."

"Hi Julie," they said and moved aside to let me pass.

"Sit out here for a while, Frank," I heard Pete say as I went in. "You ought to be nice to my friends," he added as Frank pushed his way after me.

After dinner that night, I left Sandra and her mother reading in the living room and went upstairs to fling myself across the bed and think a few things over. I was no longer sure how I felt about Frank. I liked talking to him, walking beside him and feeling our clasped hands brush against my skirt. I liked all the things we did alone but when we were with people I felt uncomfortable. I kept hoping they could look at him and see something more than I could, wishing that he would say something so loud that everyone would turn, but afraid that, if he did, they would turn and move away.

Someone was whistling outside the window. I sat up and looked. It was Pete, sitting on the porch roof. He looked over his shoulder when I skitted a pebble from the windowsill, across the tiles at him.

"C'mon out, Julie," he said, waving me over. "It's a lot cooler out here. Frank working at the florist's?"

I nodded and climbed out to the roof. I dangled my legs over the edge as I sat down beside him.

"You pretty hot for my brother?" he asked.

"I don't know. He can be awfully nice."

"Yeah, I guess so. I don't know him too well any more. He thinks he's too good for me," Pete commented, dropping a stone neatly into a flower pot below us. "Maybe he doesn't," he added. "We just don't talk the same language, or believe in the same things."

"What sort of things?" I asked.

"I don't know. Oh things like his being so quiet and so god damned polite. It makes me feel like kicking him in the tail sometimes, to see if he has any reactions at all. He could never be in a gang. No one would ever trust him."

"I think he's trustworthy," I said, moving around so that I could lie on my back and look up at the stars.

"I mean if he says he's going to do something, he'll do it. But he never does anything that takes any guts. If he ever does, it'll be because the only other thing he could do would take more."

Pete looked down at me for a while and brushed a piece of hair out of my eyes. "What do you see in him anyway?"

"He's different," I said and thought a minute. "You know, Pete, I'm not sure if I do or not, see anything in him, I mean. I kind of feel that he's a lot more than he lets on, that, if I keep looking, I'll find something unique."

"I wouldn't look if I were you," Pete answered, "There's something guys don't like about him, any guys, not only my friends. There's something you can almost feel when he walks in a room. I always say trust three who say something before you trust one who says nothing. Even if the three are wrong, you've got friends who'll stick up for something . . . for you, too, if it won't hurt them."

"But Pete," I interrupted, "Frank isn't like you. How do you know he doesn't have friends at school?"

"He'd talk about them, if he did. If Frank had friends, anywhere, he wouldn't come back here." Pete threw another stone over the back fence. It rattled across the paved alleyway.

"Why are you in a gang, Pete?" I asked, wondering if I ought to bring up the subject. "At least everyone says you are. What do you get out of it?"

He looked at me steadily. For once his eyes did not have a completely detached look about their cool blueness. He touched the open collar of my blouse and smiled down at me.

"That's not a fair question when you don't know anything about gangs."

"Well, explain them to me then," I said.

"You can't explain a gang, Julie. You just get into one, sooner or later around here, if you want to get along. You get beat up some day when you're walking along the street and join for protection, or your form a new one out of a lot of beat up guys from around the streets. Maybe you do something that gets you a name so they ask you to join. Sometimes you just grow into one when you and all the guys on your block have to fight another gang. If I didn't belong, do you think Sandra would be safe on this block?"

"Oh Pete," I scoffed, "You can't tell me that she's safe only because you happen to be in a gang. Maybe if they all had something against her, or you, they might make trouble. They wouldn't do anything just because they didn't know her."

"Julie, you don't know anything about this part of Brooklyn. All you'd have to do is look down Fulton Street some night. You'd understand."

"What do you mean? 'Walk down Fulton Street.'"

"A girl no one knows isn't safe unless there's a cop or two around. Even then, four or five guys could rush her and make everyone think they were all just tearing

(Continued on page 23)



April

GREENING branches rest the birds;
Bugs play circles on a pool;
Selfless shelves take back their words
As grass comes home to rule.

Run to tempt the wind's soft warmth.
Dust out your winter thinking bowl.
Compile and store away the swarm
Of old conclusions, cluttered soul.

Spring's a sappy, clean-patched hobo,
Whose light, unshaven plans for men
Will put your plugging brain in storage;
Take out the simple one again.

Don't scorn the once familiar fit
When wrinkles can be ironed fresh.
Mothballs cry for winter's knit
And Spring is selling dacron mesh.

Thoughts are always bound by knowledge
Opaque and tight in colder school,
But spring's a net, to let the sun's edge
Bless with hope the April Fool.

"A GOOD STORY"

LAY not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and rust . . ." The minister read on, and Mrs. Tripplett controlled the impulse to "squirm uncomfortably." "Of all lessons to be read on this day," she thought. "Maybe I am taking this business too much to heart, but people don't have to keep prodding me about it." She eyed the minister resentfully.

The situation which had been in her thoughts almost constantly for the past eighteen hours concerned her prize possession. Mrs. Tripplett had the most beautiful, artistic, orderly gardens in her suburb. She smiled self-consciously, but a bit too readily, acknowledging that she guessed she did have a green thumb—just like her father, you know. Mrs. Tripplett's son Harold, age nine, showed signs of possessing this same appendage and often helped his mother and Elton the hired man, as they worked in the yard. Mrs. Tripplett was gratified by the child's interest—or rather, had been gratified—but now that interest had backfired.

Saturday afternoon when she stepped out to check on the jonquils, she discovered that one whole bed—the round one which formed the center of the color scheme she had so carefully planned—was no longer a circle of budding jonquils, but a bed of healthy dirt, with scarcely a trace of the holes where the jonquils had been. Someone had uprooted all the plants. She called Elton, who knew nothing, and she called Sarah the cook, who "didn't see nobody out there 'cept li'l Har'ld."

Mrs. Tripplett dismissed the idea of Harold's guilt almost before it occurred to her, and her eyes opened, big and angry. She gasped, "It must have been one of those women from the West End Garden Club, who can't stand to see us win the prize again this spring. Of all the mean tricks!" And she nearly cried.

That night at dinner she was still berating "those West End women." Mr. Tripplett ate his dinner, as usual, in silence, and Harold didn't eat his, also in silence.

"Mama," he said finally, "is it the jonquils?"

"Of course it's the jonquils. They centered that pattern. Those women ought to be arrested. Why, that's just plain robbery—its . . ."

"Those women' didn't take 'em," said Harold.

"What?" Mrs. Tripplett was amazed. "Of course, they did."

"No," said Harold.

"No?' Why who else . . . Harold, what do you know about this?"

Harold said, "If I tell, can I have two desserts instead of this apple salad?"

"Yes, yes, of course," said his mother impatiently. "Just tell."

"Well," Harold took a big breath, "Well, you remember last week I went home with Ella?"

Mrs. Tripplett nodded grimly. Ella was the laundress, and Harold had talked the old darky into a jaunt to "colored town." His mother nearly had the police out to find him.

"Well, Ella has some beautiful flowers. Her yard has got the best dirt you ever saw. I looked at it just like you told me. And she has some roses and azaleas and pansies and some of those purple things—" he screwed up his face.

"Petunias," said his mother impatiently.

"Petunias," Harold repeated, "but she needed something yellow, so this afternoon I got a big box and the trowl and, just like you showed me, I dug up those jonquils, because they fit her yard just right, and I told her you sent 'em, and she was so glad she 'bout cried. And we planted 'em and that's how my pants got dirty, and that's why I was late for supper."

Mrs. Tripplett stared at her son. Mr. Tripplett's right eye wrinkled, as it did when he was amused, and he thought "Why the little dickens!" and excused himself to go bowling, before his wife drew him into what he was sure would be an uncomfortable situation.

"Harold," said Mrs. Tripplett carefully, "don't you know that you shouldn't take other people's things without asking?"

"Yes'm, but . . ."

"Don't you know how important it is that *my* garden be at its best next week?"

"Yes'm, but . . ."

"Don't you know how I loved that bed of flowers?"

"Yes'm, and that's why I thought you'd want Ella to have 'em, 'cause she loves 'em too. You made me give Cousin Agnes my rabbit because she loved it."

That night in bed Mrs. Tripplett couldn't sleep. She poked Mr. Tripplett. "What in the world can I do? That empty bed ruins my design. We'll lose the prize for sure. I simply can't go out there and tell Ella I want those flowers back after she got so sentimental about them. She even called up while you were out bowling, and what could I *say*?"

Mr. Tripplett said, "Better just forget it," and went back to sleep.

"Just forget the four-year-in-a-row Garden Club Medal?" Mrs. Tripplett was indignant. "Why how could I? Just think, the news stories, maybe even pictures. I'm going out there Monday and get those flowers back.

But she kept thinking about Harold and Agnes' rabbit, and Ella crying and then this lesson about "Lay not up . . ." and, sure enough, it was the text for the sermon.

As she and Mr. Tripplett and Harold left the church, they were drawn into a conversation by the lady who was president of the Woman's Auxiliary *and* of the West End Garden Club. "It's certainly a coincidence," said Madame President. This lesson and sermon, I mean. You know, the other day as I started to read my page in "Forward Day by Day," one of those women from over the levee came asking me for flowers. Of course, I couldn't cut any—not with the show next week." Here she smiled a comradely smile at Mrs. Tripplett, and Mrs. Tripplett flinched. "And when I went back to my reading, the lesson was on the good Samaritan. Well, I ran to catch the woman, thinking maybe she'd take some food or money instead, but she was gone. The next day when I sat down to read, I glanced at the page before, and the lesson wasn't the good Samaritan at all. Of course, I'm not saying it was any kind of supernatural occurrence, you know. It was probably just the wind or something, but it makes a good story!"

In the car Mrs. Tripplett's first remark was, "How selfish of her! Why, I

would have given the woman some flowers, not the best, of course, but a small bunch of *something*. Why, the show isn't . . ."

"Isn't it?" asked Mr. Tripplett.

"Oh," said Mrs. Tripplett. "Oh," again, and as she glanced in the rear view mirror (she always drove), she noticed that she looked a bit like the president of the Woman's Auxiliary and of the West End Garden Club.

Harold said, "I never did get my two desserts. Can I get 'em today and not eat broccoli?"

Mrs. Tripplett didn't even answer him. She drove straight home, and began to give orders in her most determined way.

"Harold (meaning senior), please get me Ann Harris on the phone. Harold (meaning junior), you go out in the back yard and start uprooting some of that monkey grass—some good, now, not the bunches that have turned brown. Get enough to go all around that jonquil bed." Don't go now, wait till after lunch."

As Mrs. Tripplett said "jonquil bed," she winced a little and hesitated, but Mr. Tripplett handed her the telephone receiver. She grasped it firmly and said, "Hello Ann, (Ann was president of Mrs. Tripplett's Garden Club) this is Lydia. I've got the most wonderful idea for the show. Our West End friend mentioned that people had been coming to her asking for flowers—poor people, I mean—and I think each of us ought to pick a bed and give away all the plants in it. We could say the good dirt in the empty bed symbolized our work or something. Think of the publicity, and we'll be doing something different—human interest touch, you know."

Ann Harris evidently approved, because Mrs. Tripplett said, "Good. I'll help telephone. Let's get on it right away. 'Bye.'"

"My Dear, you'll take care of the publicity, won't you?" She walked into the dining room, where the two Harolds had begun dinner. "And I think you'd better say . . ." She stopped. Mr. Tripplett had not been eating. He looked up at her—a peculiar look—, said, "Yes, of course," and continued watching little Harold, excited, in his sober way, at the thought of *two* servings of pie a la mode, scraping all his broccoli to one side of the plate.

ELAINE KIMBALL

Dylan Thomas

DYLAN THOMAS, the great Welsh bard,
Wrote poetry some think awfully hard.
I've given up puzzling . . . I just hear the ringing
The sighing, the clashing of his words singing.

Cure

THEY hung the hog from rafters
To spend his years in hell,
Locked the door and started
A fire burning well
To purge him of his sins
Til' he was pure and sweet
And worthy of becoming
One with higher meat . . .

At Our Young Tea Party

AT our young tea party
Under the chinaberry tree
We waved leaf fans
And you scratched the ears
Of the china elephant
With mudpie hands;
That obedient beast trumpeted tea
While Time crouched
In the chinaberry tree,
Waiting to steal you from me.



THE DOOR

THROUGH the door, Beth could see the lighted palm trees reflected in the water. Waiters hurried from table to table balancing heavy trays above the heads of the unconcerned circles of laughing people. Bare shoulders and dark tuxedos presented a picture of black and white. The dance floor was filled with spinning couples, and the oversize orchestra leader smiled benevolently on his performing charges. The lights of a small city shone faintly from across the water, and a small boat moved slowly out of sight. Beth stood at the entrance to this fairyland, the mysterious scene of black and white, confusion and tranquility. She looked at her watch; it was ten minutes after nine. Susan had said to come at nine. Susan, who was now among the sun-tanned multitude, had passed through the doorway with no concern. Susan had not been confronted with a doorway ruthlessly guarding its secrets. Susan, who had been so kind to Beth at the beach today, was a familiar part of this mysterious land beyond the door. Beth thought of Susan's friendly manner and her ability to make the new girl feel at ease. The "new girl," how Beth hated to be she; the one whom no one knew, whom no one wanted to bother with, and who was difficult to talk with. At home, Beth was the one who knew everyone and whom everyone knew. The people in the fairyland were different from the ones at home. Not only did they talk faster, but they thought and acted faster. The scene she watched offered a contrast to the slow and lazy parties of her Southern friends. She wished this was a dance with dates. No one had dates for this dance, but this gave her no more assurance. Beth looked at her watch, it was fifteen minutes after. If only someone she had met at the beach today would see her and come out of the picture to help her into it. She resolved to always be the friend of any "new girl." Beth touched her dark hair in the back to assure herself that the curl still remained. She looked down at her long blue dress and smoothed the skirt. She no longer felt fresh and charming, as her parents had assured her she was when she left home. She felt as if she had been standing before the door for several hours. All sense of time had disappeared. She grasped her evening bag tighter, but it offered no courage. Her watch now said twenty after. The fairyland beckoned, and the orchestra played a familiar tune. The door sneered at her timidity. Beth straightened her shoulders and took a step forward. The threshold was beneath her; she stepped over. A harassed head waiter hurried up to her.

"Your name, please, miss."

"Beth Jeffers."

He consulted his typewritten reservation sheet. He looked carefully through the pages, almost too carefully. Where was Beth's name? Had Susan forgotten her promise to reserve a place at her table? Was she to be a spectator longer than she thought? Bothered with such doubts, Beth anxiously watched the man's face for a sign of enlightenment.

"Yes. Here you are. Table twenty-three. This way, please."

A group of stags discussed the girls on the dance floor; a tanned boy shyly held the hand of the smiling girl across the table; a laughing crowd drank champagne to their hostess. The candlelight produced a confusion of wavering shadows on either side. A waiter swept past with his trays of delicacies.

"Table twenty-three. Here you are, Miss Jeffers." And he disappeared before she could thank him.

"Beth, hey! You're late. We were beginning to worry."

"Hi, Susan. I am sorry."

Four boys stood up as Beth came to the table. They had been at the beach today; Beth recognized them.

"You remember Stan, Doug, Bob, and Brad, don't you, Beth?"

Beth spoke to each one. She remembered Stan especially. He had been so nice to her all afternoon at the beach, and his attentiveness had helped to ease the self-consciousness of that "new feeling." She felt the warmth in his greeting now. She sat down at the table with Susan's friends. They were discussing Eastern colleges and where they wanted to go. Beth listened to their conversation; they sounded like her friends at home. Perhaps, they were no different; perhaps she was wrong in her judgment; perhaps, she had imagined all of her fears.

"Would you like to dance, Beth? The music is very good," Stan said.

"I'd love to, Stan," Beth heard herself answer. Excuse us, please, you all."

They began the confusing walk through the network of tables. The dance floor was crowded, but Stan pushed in with ease. The music was good, and Beth relaxed. Momentarily, her fears were forgotten in the security of being a part of the rhythmic throng. Stan smiled down at her. All conversation was lost in the music, dancing, and gaiety. Beth looked around her. She was no longer the stranger looking in; she was a part of the dazzling scene of palm trees, laughing people, and shining water. She looked toward the doorway where she was standing not long ago. There, in the same place where Beth had stood was now another girl. She looked familiar, Beth thought. Then she remembered her. She had been at the beach today also, but there had been no Susan or Stan for the spectator now standing at the door.

Stan had seen Beth's glances toward the door. He had noticed the girl also.

"Who is she?" he asked.

Beth looked at her once more. As she watched, the girl smoothed her dress and touched the back of her hair.

"Just a girl that I saw at the beach today," she answered. "She must be new; she's terribly shy. Wouldn't it be awful to feel like that?"

Stan spun Beth around, and they moved toward the center of the floor. The couple danced further into the crowd of twirling people, deeper into the fairyland of music, laughter, and sophistication.

Creation

"HAVE you talked to anyone lately?"

"I spoke with the dawn, swathed in pearl mist."

"What did she say?"

"The child is not born yet."

"And the mother?"

"Doing well."

"Have you talked to anyone lately,"

"I called to the garish midday sun."

"What did he say?"

"The child is not come."

"And the mother?"

"In pain."

"Have you traveled anywhere lately?"

"Ah yes, I stumbled on the fold of night."

"What did you find?"

"A sunburst light on a gutted corpse

And a child sleeping."

"Oh."

THE PALOMINO

WHAT a wonderful summer it was when I was eleven! We lived in Brooklyn then, not a Brooklyn with apartment houses, but one near an inlet of water; a Brooklyn where God's sun still loved the trees and the meadows. A few days after school had recessed, Dad returned from his hunting trip with a horse. He was a big horse (some people said he was too big a mount for a little girl of eleven) and he was magnificent! I was awed by him from the first morning he was unloaded from the van and stood quietly and tensely on the ramp, waiting for someone to welcome him to his new home. I never named him. I never could think of a name wonderful enough, and so he always remained "The Palomino." We converted the garden-shed into a stable; we removed Mother's hoes and weed-killers and put in a drainage system and ventilators, but we left the morning-glories which climbed the walls and onto the roof. A little black dog with one eye soon appeared at our stable, as if attracted by "The Palomino." After he stayed for two weeks, I reasoned he belonged to me my a loose interpretation of Common Law, and I named him Pepé.

"The Palomino" and Pepe were the only friends I needed or wanted that summer. Over-night visits to the homes of girl friends, which I once thought to be the most delightful thing the world had to offer, were discontinued. And boys, shadowy creatures who tormented you after class and at dancing school, became even more shadowy and finally nonexistent. I would much rather spend my summer in the fragrant hay, dreaming or reading. I visited less with Mother and Dad; and I hated the cousins who visited on Sunday afternoons and clamored about "The Palomino's" stall feeding him sugar. People were not a part of that summer; the only things that belonged were the sound of the wind from the water, the smell of a clean stall, and the sight of "The Palomino's" coat in the sunlight. People were only the creatures who kept me separated from my horse and dog.

And we three did have good times that summer! In the morning, just as the trees began to sound with the noise of insects, Pepé and I would sit on the floor of the stall and watch "The Palomino" eating his morning oats. "The Palomino" was our God, and the only thing in the world that mattered. Everything was done for his comfort, and we were very proud of him. When we went riding and I raced "The Palomino" on the long stretch of beach, Pepé would always be at our side, looking up because he was proud that he could keep up with "The Palomino." We chased the white birds on the beach into the water or made them flap their wings and reluctantly fly. Sometimes, when the cool evening was coming, I would sit on a sand dune. "The Palomino" would distainfully nibble the sparse beach grass, and Pepé lie by my side. I would wave to the men returning from pleasure-fishing in their small boats propelled by outboard motors, or gaze over the water and, as all children do, wonder what was over the horizon . . .

But now the world isn't a perfect summer day. It's more like autumn when all the leaves, like all past dreams, start to turn brown and crumble. Even when it's summer now, I can't look at a leaf or a flower and see something perfect, as I did that summer; now I only see that a disease is starting to creep over the plant and soon it will be destroyed. I was sent away to prep-school, and I have been made aware . . . I have been made aware that there is not only happiness in this world, but sadness too. I have been taught that I am a member of something called society which is more important than any one person. I don't know if I agree with this, at least I don't when I think about that summer and "The Palomino." I'm not sure about anything now; everything has changed. Even the God I worship now is the God I was taught to worship when I was younger; but there is nothing strong or powerful about Him, and at times the gentle and compassionate look on His face bothers me. I wish everything were like that summer again. I haven't my horse and dog now. When I went away to school, "The Palomino" was sent to a farm. I do not think he is happy now for there is no one there to love him as I did. Pepé, after we all left, tried to find a reincarnation of "The Palomino" at a local hack stable. When I was home last vacation, I saw him lying in the road, trampled by horses whose riders could not control them and did not care. Of the three of us, I think Pepé is now the happiest . . .

The Strangest of These

(Continued from page 13)

off somewhere. Sometimes they even know the girl but then she's got it coming or they don't like her family or something."

"Pete! You can't be serious. Do you mean that, if I should walk down to meet Frank, tonight, and no one knew me . . . if I was just minding my own business and not looking as if I wanted to get picked up, that someone would bother me? With other people around?"

"Julie, girls around here aren't like you. You don't live in this neighborhood. Anyone who'd be such a . . . such a jerk . . . would have it coming.

He looked at me seriously, with just a tinge of a smile on his lips and then he added:

"Well I don't mean that every girl who walks around here will get . . . will get hurt . . . It all depends on who the gang is and whether they're feeling like it. I wouldn't take a chance on it though."

"I don't believe you," I said, sure that he was coloring it all up for my benefit. "I still think the girl has to ask for it, or something. I stood up and started to walk toward the window. Pete followed me in.

"I'll bet I could do it and no one would ever bother me," I added, climbing over the sill. "Anyway I could scream bloody murder."

"Not with a knife at your back. Don't forget, kid, those are our streets, not yours."

When we got down to the hallway I turned and said:

"I still bet I can do it. I believe I'll just walk over to the florist's and meet Frank. Dollars to doughnuts I get there safely."

"Don't be an ass," he cried, trying to catch my wrist as I went out the door. I didn't look back. I was too excited to give it up.

As I reached the corner, I saw six boys across the street. "The key-chain set," I thought, noticing that they did not give me more than a brief glance. I was disappointed.

There were store windows along the way as I turned down the block. Instead of showing displays of food or clothes, they had curtains in them. Heavily made up girls looked out at me, smiling to the men that passed by. They wore low nylon blouses, peasant skirts and lots of beads. "Brooklyn gypsies." I thought, remembering all the stories about them. "These are the kind of girls Pete is talking about," I said to myself.

But when I looked ahead, there was another gang of boys on the next corner. They did not look as disinterested. I looked back. The boys on the other corner had started to follow me. The ones in front looked as if they were waiting. I glanced across the street. Two boys and a cute girl were lounging in a doorway, watching me. A woman opened a window, above me, and yelled:

"Doreen, why the Hell ain't you inside?"

"Go kiss it!" shouted the cute girl.

I walked on up the block, trying to look as if I knew what I was doing. A baby started to cry somewhere. I could smell onions.

"Doreen," shouted a masculine voice this time. "You come up now or I'll break your neck. Who d'ya think you are, talking to your Ma like that. Come up here;"

"Oh all right," called Doreen, disentangling herself from the group and walking across the street. "See you tomorrow, Chuck."

She went into a doorway. I was almost at the end of the block. The streetlight above me was smashed.

"Say Blondie," one of the boys on the corner crooned, "Lookin' for anyone special?"

I felt an arm go round my waist, holding me from running.

"Turn around and look at me, you dumb cluck," I heard Pete's voice saying quietly. "These guys know me."

"O.K. Howie," he said to the boy who had spoken to me, "stick to your own territory, will you."

I turned around and saw the boys from the other corner right in back of me.

"You ain't very bright, Julie," said one of them. "You should of waved to us." It was one of the boys who had been on the steps with Pete.

We walked back to the house. Pete kept his arm around me.

"I better teach you to use a knife sometime," he said as we went in the door. "I don't think you ought to tell Frank about this," he added.

"I don't think I ought to tell anyone," I replied.

Sandra was still in the living room, reading. I walked over and sat down on the sofa.

"Who's books?" I asked, indicating the ones on the shelves.

"Mostly Mother's texts," she replied. "Some of them were Dad's. Want a drink or something?"

"I'd love a Tom Collins, if it's not too much trouble."

"Not at all," Sandra said as she went out of the room. "We have some mix downstairs and Aunt Riggs is drinking gin now. Want a drink Pete?" she asked, seeing him standing in the doorway. "Where did you two go anyway?"

"Just for a walk," I called.

Picking up Frank's college yearbook from the table in front of me, I leafed through it. There was only a tiny picture of him on his company's page.

"Checking up?" asked Pete. "You won't be overwhelmed by his popularity, you know."

"I know," I answered, looking up at Pete. I noticed, then, that he was not wearing a keychain.

"I thought keychains were part of a gang's uniform," I said.

"Is that the only reason you talk to me . . . because I'm in a gang?"

"No Pete," I said, laughing, "but I can't help but be interested."

"You'd probably run like hell if I treated you the way you think I treat the girls I go out with. Even gang leaders neck the way your friends do, you know."

"I wasn't even thinking about that," I said.

"No, but you would have soon enough," Pete grinned, sitting down beside me.

"All girls think about that. You're a pretty good kid, though, when it comes to being human. I guess money doesn't spoil everyone."

"When are you going to teach me to use a knife?"

"Come down later," he said as Frank came in the door.

"Hi. You worried I'm stealing your property, Frank?" he asked, crossing his legs in front of him.

"I'm breaking out in a cold sweat," said Frank sarcastically. "Is he bothering you, Julie?"

"Pete?" I asked. "Why Pete and I are old friends from way back."

"Can it, Julie. Frank doesn't understand what the word means." Pete got up and went downstairs.

"Don't pay too much attention to him," Frank commented as we listened to his careless shuffle down the steps. "He's not the kind of person you should ever meet. Right now he's in such hot water about a gang fight that Mother's absolutely sick."

"A fight? What about?"

"Oh, some gang robbed one of the stores on the street. The guy who owns the store lets Pete and his hoods use the back room as sort of a clubhouse; so Pete

went after the gang and two of his friends got picked up for knifing. It's a matter of time until they tell who was with them." Frank dismissed the story by lying down on the sofa and putting his head in my lap.

"Gosh but I'm worn out. Do you mind?"

"No," I said, moving away slightly. "I guess it's not much fun having to work after dinner."

"I'm going to quit as soon as they get a replacement." He put his hand on my knee.

"Please don't, Frank. I don't like people to put their hands on me."

"Do I still have to be 'people,' Julie?" he asked.

I looked down at him. His eyes were closed and his mouth looked almost determined . . . upside down. He moved his hand away.

"Julie, you know I'd never hurt you. I'll never touch you again unless you want me to. I'll promise you that."

"Let's go down to Pete and Sandra," I said, suddenly getting up so that his head flopped down on the sofa. "They're making drinks."

"I don't want one. Go on down by yourself."

Feeling uncomfortable and yet not willing to go back and make things right with the necessary words, I went downstairs. The door to Pete's room was open so I stood in the doorway and looked at him.

"Have a fight?" he asked.

"No."

"Just getting bored?"

"Perhaps."

"It's your privilege. Don't worry about it."

"Want to give me that knife lesson now?"

"Get your mind off your problems, first. You can't use a knife well if you're thinking about a hundred different things. You've got to be thinking about the other person."

"Well, I'm not going to throw the knife at you, am I?"

"No. But it won't help to throw it at a lot of thoughts either."

"Here, let me show you how to hold one," he continued, taking a blue knife out of his pocket. Closed, it looked like a jackknife except for the little steel pushbutton on the side of the handle.

Pete stood up and faced me.

"A switchblade's used mostly when you're close up," he explained, "so you don't have to let it out of your hand. It's in your pocket, closed, one minute and it's in somebody else, open, the next."

"Be sure, when you open it, that you feel the blade lock, like this." He pushed the button and felt the base of the blade as it clicked in place. "Keep checking a knife for that. They can be tricky. Then be careful you don't press the switch again, 'cause it'll free the blade for closing. If you're close up to a guy, keep the knife down by your side. Then come up with it, turning your wrist at the same time so it twists in." He suddenly thrust his hand up into an imaginary victim.

"If you're working on the face, don't stab; just lift your arm and cut down with the point." He smiled as I shuddered. "Look kid," he said, amused, "You wanted this and you know it's not for games. Forget anything you ever learned about a jackknife if you're going to throw at someone," he continued, "it's a straight knife from the moment you let it go from your hand so throw it like you'd throw a dart." He closed the knife again and then as he flipped it open he reversed his grip so that he was holding it from underneath. Before I could see the movement the knife was quivering in the wall behind me.

"Don't throw at the wall though," he added as he walked over and pulled it out. "You'll wreck the blade."

He handed me the knife to throw. I swung around, aiming for the door-frame. It landed there. Frank was standing in the doorway.

"What in hell are you doing?"

Frank strode into the room and grabbed the knife out of my hand. He looked at it and then closed it. "Here. Keep your talents to yourself," he said throwing the closed knife at Pete.

"Good Lord, Julie, don't you know it's against the law to have one of these?"

"For God's sake, Frank, Julie didn't know you were there."

"I don't care where she thought I was. Those things are illegal. You shouldn't even have one in the house, especially now!"

Frank stood in the middle of the room. White with anger and clenching his fists, he looked crueler than I ever thought anyone could.

"You don't have to bring that up, Frank" Pete said, his voice taut.

"I'll say what I damn well want. If you'd left that part of your life outside the house and kept the way you do your dirty work to yourself, it would have been different. Julie might as well know how you got the experience that qualifies you so well for teaching it to her."

"Look Frank," Pete interrupted, each word cutting into silence, "I live my life the way I want. I got into this freaking world on someone else's kicks but I can live it for my own. If I hadn't been around to shut mouths and give orders you wouldn't be able to go your dainty way as far as this. Don't pin any roses on me but don't get me mad either."

"For God's sake, stop this," Sandra yelled from the doorway. "Things are bad enough without your having to fight about it."

"What have you got to say about it?" Pete asked.

"I'm not saying anything. But you might feel less like sounding off if you knew that Mother's already up at the Police station trying to give you an alibi."

"Why should she cover for him?" Frank demanded. "What's he ever done for her?"

"He happens to be her son," Sandra said sarcastically.

"I don't care who he is. We don't owe him anything. Let him go back to his friends for an alibi . . . if he's got any left right now."

"Frank, please stop," Sandra begged. "Mother said not to . . ."

"Mother said not to what? Come on. You've gotten this far. You might as well finish."

Pete turned, staring at Sandra. Frank smiled.

"I'll tell you."

Frank's words came out as easily as syrup.

"You've been identified as the one who started the whole thing. The knifing's been blamed on you too. But it wasn't some stoolie from the other gang. Do you know who it was?" He paused. Pete said nothing. "Well it was Eddie, your own friend . . . your precious right hand."

The room was still. Sandra walked back into the kitchen. Frank waited, triumphantly for an answer. I felt like a tremendous grey rock, unnoticed, useless, cluttering the room with my presence.

Pete looked at the knife in his hand. A curious, helpless smile played on his lips. He glanced at Frank, at me and at the knife again. An expression, almost relaxed, came into his face. His eyes were a clear, deep blue.

"Well, that's kicks," he said finally. "You see Julie, you can't explain why you're in a gang. You can't prove what it is you get out of it until you have to prove your loyalty to it."

"Eddie sure did, didn't he," Frank said sarcastically.

"Yeah, he did," answered Pete. "He had to name someone once the cops started working on him. He had to be honest."

. . . I said it was a peculiar thing to be part of all that and to walk away with nothing but the memories and the strangeness. Now that I think back on it I was a part of nothing. I was only there.

MITZI DJERF

On the Day Before Exams

UPON the dull, flat greyiness of the week,
(Assume a week can be a countryside.)
Floating softly through the slimy trees,
Dead stumps, where all his consorts hide,
Morpheus, who deadens light of Pan,
Spreads lassitude, like syrup, over all;
Dead stumps . . . People,
Too tired to fall.
Since this would be a classic pastoral,
Sound foggy saxophones in lieu of shepherds pipe.
Evoke the globs of God-dreams where they sleep
And summon noise, before the cobwebs swipe
All movement from the place we are.
Helpless knowledge rots. The silent clam
Of lethargy hangs, charm, around all necks;
And one has not the energy to cram.

ELM STREET

IT WAS a quiet, shady street with a common name, Elm Street. The funny part about the place was that half the trees on it were maples. Not many cars went down its worn road because it wasn't a through street, it didn't go anywhere—just stopped at the end. The street was symbolic of the people living there, quiet, modest, middle class, they weren't going anywhere, never advanced in life, they were just calmly passing through. My house was in the middle of the street. We did have elms in front, loads of them—in fact they surrounded the house too. Our house was kind of brownish in color—it really wasn't bad looking—we liked it, but of course we never had any other place to compare it to.

Right across the street lived the Greens. Not an unusual name—but boy, their daughter was something unusual, her name was Julie, Julie Green. She was a sweet kid (not like her folks who were always trying to “better themselves” as Mom would put it), and pretty, well—she only was our high school's prom queen. She was three years younger than I was and for a while, I thought she was too young for me, but I changed my mind. I'll never forget the day either—I was mowing the lawn out front when she wandered across the street and stopped near a tree to watch me.

“Hello, Glen—you mowing again?” I thought at the time that that was a foolish question to ask, since it was obvious what I was doing, but I paused for a second to say I was.

“You look awful hot, want me to get you a coke or water or something?” She was always thinking of others, but I was too much of a dope to notice it too.

“Yeah, I guess the sun is kinda hot, would ya, Julie?” As she stood up and ran gracefully across the street, I noticed how pretty her brown legs looked all tanned and everything in those white shorts. It wasn't that I was completely blind to her then, actually I had been thinking vaguely of asking her out to a movie sometime, but I had never gotten around to it. She brought me the coke, and as I drank it, I thought that I'd ask her to the movies that night. Actually, I had another motive too. There was a cute senior in my class I had been planning to ask to our senior prom, but she had been giving me a hard time, wanted to let me know she had others on the string. I figured that was okay, but two could play the game.

“Julie listen, would you—I mean, how'd you like to go see that Bill Holden picture tonight?” I knew she'd say yes because all females like Bill Holden, but the way her face lit up to that question wasn't just the prospect of Bill Holden—even I could see that.

"Oh Glen, you mean it? I mean, I'd love to go." I told her fine and I'd get Dad's car and pick her up at eight. She was still looking at me with a funny expression on her face when I began mowing again, but I didn't talk to her anymore.

That night I took her to the movies. She wore a pink sundress and looked very pretty—in fact, beautiful. Funny how a guy will notice something like that all of a sudden. I saw Jean, the senior I was trying to impress, but the truth was I was so engrossed in Julie, that I forgot all about her. I decided to take her out again. Then I asked her to our senior prom and that was the night they voted her prom queen. I was so proud of her I didn't know what to do.

After I graduated that spring, we began going together pretty steadily. I wanted to talk about plans for the future, but I knew she was awfully young, so I didn't say too much, but I sure did think a lot.

It was around July, I guess, when I told her I was going into the Army for two years. I wanted to get all that behind me so I could start to work in Dad's machine shop without any of that army business hanging over me. I saw her eyes cloud up, and for a moment I thought she was going to cry. She looked at me for a second, then said, "Well I guess that's fine, Glen—going away for me won't be so bad."

"Going away for you," I said, "where are you going?"

"Well I hadn't told you before this, because, well I didn't exactly know how to. You see, Dad's gotten a very good position in the company. I mean really good, Glen, just got promoted—an' well, you see, he's gonna send me away to boarding school next year. He said the high school here isn't too good—".

I didn't realize how good her Dad's position was, until I saw some prospective buyers coming to their home. The Greens were moving. Julie didn't tell me that part of it, Mom did. They were moving into one of those big homes across town—'way across town in an exclusive neighborhood. That really hurt me, I can't say how much. Actually, now that I look back on it it wasn't her fault, she wasn't the one to say "let's move." I guess I took it out on her though, because I wouldn't come over to see her as much and when I did. I wasn't the most pleasant character you've ever been with. Naturally things got quite strained between us. It wasn't until about two days before she was moving, that I realized that she was going—I was losing her. I got rather desperate, and I hung around their house all the time.

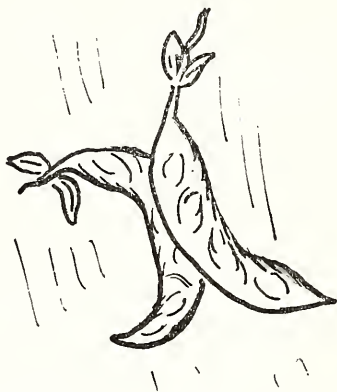
After they had gone to Carrington Place, I kept going to see her a lot, but I never felt at ease around there. All those maids and big houses made me nervous. I imagine I stood out as a misfit around there too. I felt embarrassed to take Dad's '45 Ford around there—and I hated myself for feeling that way. By that time, it was late in August and I had only a week before I was to go into the Army. Those last few days were wonderful and horrible at the same time—things being so strained as they were. I'll never forget that last night though, I think maybe my leaving made me say what I did. You see, I asked her to wait for me until I got out of the service, she said she would. Also, she said she would write me.

The letters did come too—and they were sweet and great, just like she was. But after a month they began to lessen, then stop. I didn't dare ask Mom and Dad about her, and anyway, they wouldn't have known what the Greens were doing, because now they were worlds apart.

I got a leave Christmas and came on home. The next day I was downtown doing some shopping. I was praying that maybe I'd run into Julie. I knew that as soon as we saw each other, everything would be all right again. Then I saw her, she had a green coat on. I started to call her, when I took another look. She was leaning on some guy's arm. He had on a tweed overcoat, looked like an ivy-leaguer. I watched her for a minute, she was smiling up at him, but with a look I had never seen on her face before. So I didn't say anything, just crossed the street. Funny how those things work out, isn't it?

PHYLLIS JOYNER

Seek the Hanging Butterbean



THEY had said, "Seek the hanging butterbean
Slit its sides, capture the useful white pith,
Perhaps in a mystical manner, its green
Will reproduce and you will have your green thumb,

Your green thumb which you need
To let the luxuriant garden growing
In the rich soil of your mind, seed
Itself in the dark earth outside."

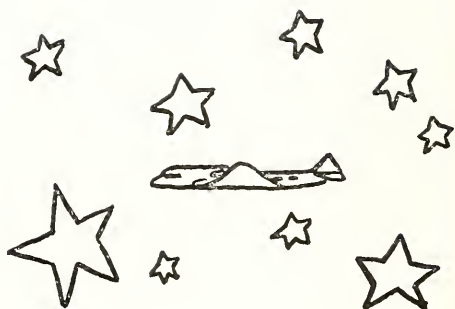
She knelt before wet green vines
Hands searching blindly for the pulpy
Whiteness clasped by curving lines,
Concealed in beetle-riddled leaves.

Dark red dahlias, baskets of gold
Roses, forsythia, marigolds, magnolias,
Jasmine, jonquils, camillas, perfect and cold
In her ephemeral garden, still unseen.

She shelled through drowsy afternoons
Goaded by this chimerical growth
Needing to be transplanted soon,
Pressing the boundaries of her brain.

When the vines were no longer green
She had a shelf of canned butterbeans.

THE PLANE



THE woman across the aisle bent her head low into the brownish mushroom hat. Mushrooms make me sick. So I tried to pick out the miniscule toyland below.

Once today I had completely lost the land. The earthy fields and towns had been replaced by a lonely symmetrical plain of white. Strange how clouds look like marshmallows—not cold white, not inviting or receptive white, but a glaring white, a good white. It made me want to skip out of the iron room of the plane, onto the white land and ski up and down the marshmallow world, peaceful in its completeness and exile, as Bethlehem must have been on that other Christmas Eve. And then we had squashed through my marshmallow kingdom, back to color, shades and tints—more like earth, and less like Christmas.

Now it is night, and what is more glorious than flying in the dark sky, watching from close-up the night put up her hair on little metal disks? Or the reflection of this mirrored in the lights of a town below?

The stewardess is telling the pilot that the woman at her apartment house is making her pay in advance.

"... And even with that horrid woman there, we're going to have a glorious Christmas! ... a big tree ..."

She is meeting a friend after the flight, and they are going to her house to decorate the tree. If she is thinking of her tree, does she really care about the tree of the woman with the mushroom hat?

Washington looks like a huge Christmas tree with its splotches of nothing, splattered here and there by red and green lights. From above we never have to see the ugly trunk or roots, only by the multiple colors and lights.

The mushroom moves. "Our flight is late. My family will be annoyed: for the children will not go to bed early for Santa Claus." The stewardess is smiling.

It is not Santa Claus who drops presents down the chimney; it is the Christ child who flies over in a glass plane and drops little stars of Bethlehem into the chimneys. On these stars are written "We care." Then even the stewardess cares for the woman with the mushroom hat.

Good Ole' Colored Town

IF YOU have never ridden through the Colored section of a small southern town you have missed one of the real joys of life. To get there you have to jostle over dusty unpaved roads, stopping your car every once in a while to wait for a dirty spotted hound to slink across the road to a shady spot or blow your horn at a little Negro boy in faded blue coveralls who is playing "last tag" with a half dozen of his sisters and brothers.

It is a heartwarming experience to watch these folk ambling along Myrtle Street or College Avenue in my home town in Georgia. They seem to be moving in slow motion compared to the people "up town" who shove you against the candy counter by the door of Rose's Ten-Cent Store rush, in front of you in the line at Cochran's Grocery.

These good ole' Southern "Niggers" as they call themselves, congregate in front of their Roxy The-a-tuh and socialize. If you drive slowly enough along Athens street you can hear them.

"Chile, I done told my missy she'll just hafta let me off Saraday for dat funral—I'm gonna be a flowah gull!"

"My white folks just gave me a brand new television. They'r doing me mighty proud."

When I get mad at the world and the superficial, insincere people who are always around, I get in the car and drive to Colored town just to listen to genuine, simple human beings. The other day when I was disgusted with life in general I hastily put some fruit into a bag and went to old Nettie's house. Nettie was formerly closely allied to my family as our wash-woman during my childhood.

I stopped the car at the side of a small, unpainted house. The wood was turning gray with age and the top of the coal shed in the tiny back yard sagged severely—I was certain that if one more leaf landed there the shed would collapse. This uncultivated spot was not pretty; no grass grew here, the ground was hard yellow dirt, and the one tree had no leaves. Yet, there was a wonderful atmosphere of peace and serenity. I was trying to figure it out as I walked up the rickety steps to Nettie's back porch where an alley cat lay sleeping.

I knocked at the rusty worn-out screen door. Nettie answered, "I'm comin'."

She came, shuffling slowly along, barefooted, groaning at every few steps. She wore a shapeless faded dress made from printed chicken feed cloth and a wad of snuff made her right jaw bulge a little.

"Nettie, do you know who I am?"

"Lawdie me, if it ain't Mrs. Slack's girl, Enic. (She never had been able to say Enid.) Did you know I was washin' for yo' mama when you was born? Ain't you growed?"

"Yes, Nettie, I'm in college now. I just wanted to come over and see how you were feeling."

"Wellum, I ain't doin' too good, Miss Enic. I got rumatizm. They got a new fancy name for it now—I think it's arthritus—but I still calls it rumatizm."

"I brought you a sack of fruit, Nettie. I hope you feel better soon."

"I sho' is glad you come to see me, Missy. I been studying about you all week. I had a notion you'd come cause I had a good feelin' right here," and she pointed to her heart.

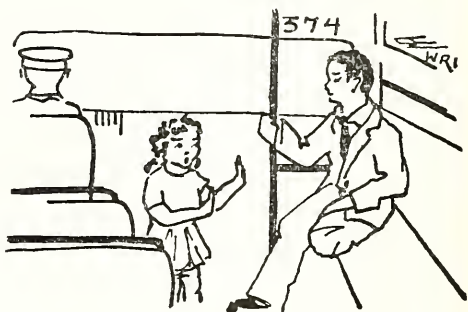
"I've got to leave, Nettie, but I'll be back to see you."

"Thank you, Miss. Tell yo' Mama to come next time."

"Thank you, Miss. Tell yo' Mama to come net time."

When I left I had a good feeling in my heart, too, and I knew why the atmosphere surrounding this homely plot of ground was so wonderful.

ROSE
MONTGOMERY



THE BUS

BOARDING the bus last Saturday morning, I thought there would be nothing unusual about my trip into town. The half-hour ride stretched before me and in my mind was the idea of enduring the trip with as little annoyance as possible. Even before I gathered my coins for the driver, my thoughts were set on town and how I would accomplish my page-long list of errands and still make the three o'clock movie.

The bus was hot and crowded, with almost every seat taken. I spotted an opening and plopped into the seat neither looking to right nor left. It was a seat for three people near the front of the bus—uncomfortable because its position makes one slide from side to side. Luckily, I was near the metal hand bar. Placing my hand firmly on it, I settled back for the ride.

I looked to my left, then away again. A thoroughly warm matron with cork screw curls and a too-tight black crepe dress is not a pleasant sight. At my right was a middle aged man. His left leg was gone. The stump ended right above the

knee and below this swung an unfilled trouser leg. I looked at this, then my eyes moved to the man's head. I noticed his hair. There was a lot of it, dark, and falling on to his forehead; his eyes were dark too, the iris and pupil appearing to converge. His bulk filled his allotted space in the cramped quarters of the bus, but he was relaxed and seemed satisfied with his position as a passenger. Finally, I noticed his hands. They were big with blunt nails, and though clean now, seemed to be hands that knew outdoor labor. The man gave no indication that he noticed my survey, he merely continued to regard the advertisement of "Ked's Tennis Shoes." Involuntarily my eyes turned again to the free swinging trouser leg—flat against the seat; it swayed a little. The more I looked the more incongruous it seemed; like a scarecrow with all the straw taken out.

Then, suddenly and shortly, he looked at me. The expression in his eyes and face made me feel a rush of shame. It had not been my right to peer at his deformity so closely. He could not hide his hurt. It was there, in the open. He could keep no one from seeing, but the expression in his eyes made me realize that I had over-stepped my privileges. It was time for me to start gazing at the advertisements. I had seen legless men before, had even sat next to them; but he was the first that had ever given me any sign to be careful, to keep away. I pulled myself forward on the seat holding tightly to the bar and remained this way until the movements of the bus made it impossible. The motion sent me falling backwards until I was sitting shoulder to shoulder to my legless neighbor. My tension lessened as we both struggled to keep our balance.

After the bus moved out of the college campus and on to the highway, the driver began stopping to let new passengers board. I got hotter and hotter; people were pressing close to the white line dividing rider from driver; I couldn't see the advertisements any more. We stopped again and again—I don't know how many times—and I began to feel sick at my stomach, furious at myself for being on the bus and conscious of the pressing humans standing over me. Then, at one of the halts, I noticed people making an effort to move to the back of the bus. An entire family had gotten on; mother, father, and four daughters. They all lined up on my side of the bus with father at the front, then mother and finally the girls ranged according to height. Looking at the father's back I could see that he was dressed in newly laundered overalls, the mother had on a cotton dress and the girls wore smaller and more faded versions of the printed cotton. The children were not clean; their hair hung in dark lumps to their shoulders. Their noses were alike; broad, flat and covered with freckles; but their eyes were beautiful, big and set far apart and wide, wide open. As soon as the bus began its swaying journey again the littliest one, about seven years old, got wedged between me and the man on my right. Her first sight of the man's empty trouser leg made her eyes go even bigger. Her hands clutched at her sister's dress; she clenched them tightly. She tried to look down to see her own legs, but there wasn't enough space to move them out into view. Her eyes turned back to the man; she gazed at him steadily and solemnly. Then her whole body stiffened; dark grimy wrinkles appeared at the places where her hands were on the blue-flowered dress. Her eyes dropped and she looked only at the leg, at the place where the stump must have ended. A curious thing happened. While the child's eyes seemed to draw the stump closer and closer to her, her body began to move backwards in the bus, her legs and torso pushing so as to get far away; all the while holding on to the sister's dress and all

the while looking at the trouser. The man looked down at the child. He saw her intense absorption; he saw her revulsion. His hand moved a little from his lap, then he held it still. He turned his head to look at the front of the bus, to see where his stop would be. No one paid attention to the man or child. The dull swaying continued, caught, and cleaved the passengers together with a spreading torpor. Only the man and child were isolated, alive.

With a larger-than-usual swerve, the bus turned off the main highway on the way to an outlying village. As the bus righted itself, the passengers were flung to the front against each other. The little girl came forward in a rush, lost possession of the security of her sister's dress, and landed immediately in front of the man. Her shoulders hunched up, she shut her eyes very tightly, and swung around away from him. The man put his hand on the seat to steady himself. He looked down quickly at the child; saw the back of that high-held head, and the thin shoulder blades pushing against the printed cotton; saw her unbalanced position. Nothing was there to steady her. His hands jerked slightly, his expression showed indecision, torture and fear. Then, his face cleared, his hands moved surely to the child's shoulders, and her stiff body was seated between the man and me. She stared ahead, every muscle taut. The man kept his hands firmly on her shoulders, keeping her from swaying too much.

Slowly the bus moved on, then right before reaching town, it stopped one final time. Lots of people got off. The mother of the four girls turned around to be sure they were with her; she saw her youngest and gave the man who was holding her a quick smile. She started off the bus with her husband, the first three girls following. The youngest stayed on the seat until the last, then, the man lifted his hands from her shoulders. She sat still, then slid off the seat feet first. As her toes hit the flooring, she gave a little jump, then turned directly to the man. They looked at each other, each seeing what no one else had seen and what no one else would probably ever see again. I was embarrassed; it all seemed so naked, so intimate. Then, suddenly, a smile appeared on the girl's face. It was the biggest smile I've ever seen; it seemed too big for her own small face. It travelled over to the man and became a part of him too. The child turned now and walked off the bus; she looked once more at the man, and he at her, and was gone.

The bus moved on—we were almost in town. The number of passengers had lessened. I looked at the advertisements again. The man was once more regarding "Ked's Tennis Shoes."

ELAINE KIMBALL

The Woodchuck

WHILE out walking one day Henry Thoreau
Met head on outside of his burrow
A woodchuck who wasn't sufficiently nimble.
Do you suppose his chuck children knew Pa was a symbol?

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Express to Brooklyn

AT SOMEWHERE less than midnight four others ride and sway across the moon-cleaned bridge with me. It is still and tight and damp and subway cars at night are worse than ever.

Eustacia Vye sits beside me; red lips tight, yet living, in her white and staring mysticism.

Poe, sprawling in a grimy corner under a Bufferin ad, moans alcoholic nevermore rhyming couplets to a vanished raven once scratching at his closet top.

Across the aisle the ghost of father-murdered stalks the world-muddled brain of idealistic Hamlet.

Sitting, all of us, in a never stopping, never moving express to Brooklyn, restlessness, like a fall wind scuttling morbidity and dead leaves and the hulls of squirrel food, shatters even the peace of these shadow characters until Heathcliff stands and screams soundlessly at us all.

"Pick your books up child," whispers the knotted voice of emotional equilibrium. "Put them in your lap and ignore this company of misunderstood." Read one. Choose a safe blue cover, small-titled. Arouse no interest in you."

"But," to me I say, "Can't I ask them why?"

"Would you ask an unknown woman why her fists are clenched or a drunkard what he is? Can you tell a sitting stranger to live with men, not thoughts? Will you even bid a pacing black-haired man to sit and not be nervous? Not on a subway, child . . . not at night, or ever for that matter. They belong to themselves. Read your book."

"But are they human, these four in this one spot of world? They might vanish if I spoke."

"Then, my child, you'd be alone."

"Better that than reading among them. They might be real."

"If they are real, Child, they are not as you think them. Sit quiet and see them as you wish. In a few moments you'll be home."

"But I'll never have met them then. I'll have only seen them."

"If you meet them you will lose this vision. Keep it, child. Little bits of life like this are meant to be a mystery. They have not looked at you."

"They are too wound up in themselves."

"So are you, Child."



The Bat

IT WAS a Saturday night somewhere in the late spring of her freshman year, and Irma Thornton Thompson was lying in bed in her narrow, single room at _____ College. The window above her bed was open, and she was lying on her back, watching the breeze turn her curtains into organdy sails. She was not sleepy, but she had gone to bed because she had completed her assignments until Tuesday and the few girls she was friendly with had all gone out on dates. Irma did not date much, in fact, she had never though much about dating. Irma had been told by her parents that she was being sent to school to learn, and that she could learn much better if she dated only on "big" weekends.

Irma had just resigned herself to sleep when a creature, through it's wandering, flew into the room through the open window. Irma smiled for she thought it was a misguided bird and started to get out of bed to help the poor thing. She had gotten one foot on the floor when she realized the misguided creature was a bat. She quickly pulled back her foot and drew the covers over her entire body, including her head. She was not afraid the bat would become entangled in her hair, but that it would fly at once to her throat. You see, Irma Thompson believed in vampires.

She believed in vampires when her contemporaries believed in giants and elves. She had often left a half-read tale of Andersen to beg her grandmother to tell her a story, which grandmother usually eagerly did. Her grandmother came from that part of Central Europe where there was no place for the mischievous "little-people" in folk-lore, only the dark stories of the supernatural where enchanted people moved under the influence of vampires and wolves. Irma's childish delight in being terrified grew into something much more morbid, until she went to sleep every night with a piece of garlic, stolen from the kitchen, under her pillow to protect her from evil. But as other children gradually forgot about the boogey-man, Irma gradually forgot about vampires—until this night . . .

The bat flapped about the room. Irma, although it was not part of the Lutheran ritual, blessed herself. She tried to remember all the elaborate ways of fending off a vampire which her grandmother had taught her. She did not have the necessary crucifix or garlic; the only way she could prevent the creature from drinking her blood was to stay awake until the dawn paralyzed his evil power. But if she should fall asleep . . . She wondered if the bat would assume a human form when it came to victimize her. Would she be able to smell the intoxicating foulness of its breath as it bent over her neck? She was sweating now; the blanket was stifling her. The agony of waiting; it would be like this every night. A vampire kept returning to

its prey. The wounds on her neck would be the size of needle pricks at first, but then they would widen and become deeper after each visit. How would she explain these marks to her friends? She would have to wear a scarf high on her neck, just as some girls wore them after a heavy date. She would look forward to the coming of the vampire more and more every night, and feel more and more of a ghoulish thrill each time it drank her blood. And then, she would finally die, and the school would ship her body home. After a while, she would become a vampire, and she would leave her grave at night to find her own victims—how she would laugh at them as they cowered under their blankets. She would be voluptuous then; all female vampires were voluptuous and seductive. Irma tried to tell herself that she was being silly as she forked her fingers to ward off evil. She started reciting the "Our Father." She hoped the unbroken chant would be powerful enough to keep the vampire away as she ventured a look over the blanket. She saw the bat flying from one side of the room to the other, furiously swerving as he approached a wall. Irma knew it was infuriated because she was praying. Suddenly the bat darted out of the window and Irma, just as quickly, stood on her bed and raised the sash. The bat was gone, but her childhood had returned.



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The Beloved Country

ALAN PATON'S book *Cry the Beloved Country* deals with a problem which is fundamental throughout the world, that of Race Relations. The novel is set in South Africa, which is a country wrangling in a turmoil of bitterness and fear from racial prejudice. Africa as a whole is beset with difficulties arising from differences in colour and creed, but the problem is not the same in any two countries of that continent.

The Union of South Africa, although only less than one twentieth the size of Africa, has half of Africa's white population within its borders; there are two and a half million Europeans and some ten million natives. The situation is further complicated because just over half these Europeans are Afrikaaners of Dutch, German and French origin and speak Afrikaaners, while the rest are of British descent and speak English. Unfortunately it was not a complete "melting pot" as in America, and the British descended South Africans, who came later than the Afrikaaners, have kept themselves apart in language, culture, religion and opinions.

The primitive African natives migrated south from Central Africa and met the Afrikaaners who were trekking north away from British rule. The Kaffir Wars ensued, and the natives were defeated. Since then they have been kept under white domination. At present South Africa is governed by the Afrikaaners who believe that the African should develop along his own lines and not become Westernized. There is a legal colour ban to suppress the natives and protect the whites from both physical violence and the more subtle gradual take-over of power and position by force of numbers.

By the colour bar natives are forbidden to perform any skilled work, so that the supply of cheap unskilled labor is maintained for the mines and factories. Now the government insists on educating the natives so they will be fit only for the lower stations in life. No wonder there is so much bitterness and discontent.

Alan Paton, in *Cry the Beloved Country*, has revealed the deep emotional upheaval caused by this situation, yet the story tells of ordinary people caught up by South Africa's whirl of new developments and old prejudices. No one can escape the situation but some refuse to think about it, while others like Mr. Jarvis try whole-heartedly to do something about it. Natives constantly leave their more peaceful rural life for the misery and crime of large cities like Johannesburg. The pay on farms is very small, and the land in native reserves is eroded and barren due to ignorant farming methods; so what could be more tempting than the glitter of a wealthy city, especially if a labor recruiting officer has painted a rosy picture? Thus the tribe is broken up, but there is nothing left in its stead, often not even the family, for men coming to work in Johannesburg may not see their families for years on end.

The scenes Paton so vividly describes are true, the slums on the outskirts of Johannesburg are horrific, and yet there are beautiful European residential areas. All that is pleasant seems to go to the favored few, although it is paid for in fear and uncertainty. Those charming windows are all barred and the inviting front-doors will be securely locked at night.

The magnificent scenery is described with a love that all South Africans bear for their country, yet it seems impossible for all the different races who are South Africans to share the Beloved Country in love and harmony. Only the future will tell what is to become of that southernmost portion of Africa, just as only the future can tell the fate of the whole vast continent of Africa.



RUTH FRAME

THE NEW YEAR

AFTER the old year passes,
Before the new one comes,
Candle light and music
And ceremonial drums.

Merry bells, and sad bells,
Black tie and tails,
Champagne and egg nog,
Sardines and ale.

Laughter in the ballrooms,
Tears upon the street,
A sudden clash of sword on shield
When brass and silver meet.

The poor count the copper,
And the rich count the gold.
The new year will be weary
Before he's very old.

Merry Christmas Remembered

I BOUGHT a handsome 21-jewel watch for John, after waiting in line for half an hour's consultation at the jeweler's, and left it to be engraved. Outside I stood for a minute trying to decide whether to pick up the greeting cards I had ordered or to go home. I hated to think of battling the traffic; but on second thought, it was sure to be worse back at the house. Liza was having one of those bad days when she invariably failed to season the food properly, Jack's friends from Princeton had just come, Susan was having several people over for cocktails, and John had doubtless developed a headache from helping the gardener put the outdoor lights on the cedar. I decided to go for the Christmas cards.

I shifted my packages from my right arm to my left and began to push through the crowd in the direction of the car. "It's a good thing I brought the station wagon instead of the Lincoln," I thought—"I can pick up the tree on the way home."

The snow on the pavement had been trampled away, but it hopefully kept on falling, which seemed silly somehow. It only turned to slush in the gutters and made it necessary to get more anti-freeze. It didn't even *begin* to look pretty until you got out to the suburbs. I suddenly became very tired, thinking how Susan's children were spoiling the appearance of the front yard with their sleds. I was no longer looking where I was going, and collided violently with a young Salvation Army man who was standing on the street corner. Embarrassed, I fumbled for a dollar bill and gave it to him. He smiled. "God bless you," he said. I walked away, strangely disturbed.

John was very angry because I forgot to get the Christmas cards and the tree, that day.



MARTHAN BURNET

Waves

A RUSH of assignments flooded over the dazed, wide-eyed freshmen. At first life had been a gay houseparty, but suddenly the young ones had glanced up to see work bearing down on them. It crashed with a suffocating, startling, glumph, but the fledglings struggled to the surface—just in time to see another wave of work rolling relentlessly in their direction.

AWAKENING

THE early morning crowd of workers moved slowly toward their jobs. Already the sun was turning Johannesburg into a baking dish of sweltering inhabitants. Cars driven by Europeans moved slowly down the street, weaving now and then to avoid one of the blacks who had been jostled from the sidewalk. The whites in the mass mixed like a few grains of salt in a large dish of pepper.

Two pedestrians stood out from the others moving purposefully to the 7:30 deadline. A young African boy was talking intently to his companion, a sensitive-looking white priest. The two walked slowly, and seeing a small park, they nodded to each other in agreement and headed toward a bench. In this city of distinct color barriers the mixture of black and white stood out sharply. The boy and the priest did not seem to notice, however, the surprised looks which came their way. The conversation was evidently deeper than the shade of their skins.

The boy's voice showed his excitement more than his intelligent face. "Yes, Father, I know that this is a heaven-sent opportunity. To think that I will have a chance to study at Princeton, to learn things for myself and for my people, to be part of the awakening of South Africa; to think of all this rather frightens me. I feel as if I had been chosen by God to lead my people from night to day. Even when I was a young boy I knew something wasn't quite right with my country, but I couldn't understand what it was. As I grew and came to your school at the church, I saw *what* was the matter, but not *how* to correct it. Now maybe the third side will be added to my triangle, and my race, with the help of my education in America, can take its rightful position in Africa."

When the white man spoke, his voice didn't echo the enthusiasm of the younger. "David, you can't set your heart on going to America. You only won half of your battle when Princeton sent you word of your scholarship. Too often our government has stopped other attempts at study abroad by an African, and I don't want to see you so terribly disappointed. I wrote a special plea on your request for a travelers' 'certificate of character,' but still—"

"But, Father," David interrupted, "this is my one chance. I even feel it might be Africa's one chance for equality of black with white before the year 2000. Surely God will put it into their heads to give me permission."

"We must never question God, my son. Whatever happens, take it like the fine person I know you to be."

"But we really don't have to worry, do we?" The boy's question, which so wanted no for an answer, was replied to only by a downcast look.

"Well, come, David. Perhaps we will get our answer today. Right now it doesn't help to get cooked when we have nothing to stew over!"

The boy smiled as they walked out of the park, and in his face showed all the hope and expectancy of youth with a dream.

When the two reached the church, they both tried manfully to look casual and unconcerned at the long, official envelope lying on Father Dolan's desk.

". . . and at this time we feel the case needs more reviewing. The committee

assigned to the question at hand is going over the request, and the final decision will be delivered soon."

Silence made the room seem full of cotton with breathing impossible. The faces of the two, however, shouted their feelings more than words could have done. The older one, used to the workings of a white government in a land of black people, resignedly turned his thoughts to comforting his protegee. Youth's overpowering hate of all injustice showed rebelliously in the bitter, frustrated look on Stephen's face.

His feelings came tumbling out in the confusion of words. "It's not fair, not fair, not fair. I know what's wrong. They're afraid—that's all—just afraid. They're afraid that we might wake up to what they're doing to us. Why we don't have anything left. We're forced to make pitiful livings like caged animals in the mines. Families are separated. They've stripped us of the one thing which held us together—the tribal system. Nothing except old women and children are left in the country.

"We need two things above all, education and justice. Can we ever get it? Our chances come from a few educated people leading the others, but even those few are lacking. Now what do I do? Just sit and watch South Africa rot under the leadership of people who don't give a damn about us—just about the profit they can make from us?"

Wait—wait—wait—The days added up to eternities. Stephen was questioned by the police. "Just why do you want to study in America? What do you think is wrong with the education in your *own* country?"

With the hopefulness of youth, David clung to the idea that he would get his passport, that his dream would come true.

Father Dolan did everything possible, from calling the right people to writing the right notes, but words and letters could not speed up the working of the South African government.

It was five weeks later when the two received a call from the ministry of travel. "Be at my office at 2:30," was a command, not a request.

"Father, sit down," began the petty official in charge of all the dirty work to be done. "As you know, we of the ministry have given this case *most* careful consideration." As he paused for his words to settle, Stephen wanted to choke the answer from the white man's throat. "Yes, very careful consideration—and—after due deliberation—we feel—we feel that giving David Rambodi permission to study abroad could only lead to unhappiness. A boy so young might become discontent with his life at home, and in view of the general situation it seems best to deny the request."

Quite evidently the official had finished and was anxious to get rid of the bothersome pair.

Silently they left, the white bowed, the black defiant.

Stephen's mind bitterly reviewed his high hopes now squelched into dry day dreams. He was part of his own awakening.

"Black is black and white is white, and the black can't rise to a level with the whites, not with people thwarting your every move upward."

"I wasn't looking for a mixture of gray, just an equality of the two colors. Now I know better. I've woken up from my dream world of high hopes for my people in South Africa. Perhaps my children will dream the same dreams—but—what's the use, after all?"

Security

HOW SAFE, we wonder, is our way of life?
And what about the future of our world,
Which every day is burdened more with strife
As if by Greed himself through space it's hurled.
Governed by desire, always fortune bent,
Some mortals manage ruthlessly to thrive;
While others, unaware of their intent,
Toil onward in their struggle to survive.
Will the dawn of understanding e're break through
Our clouds of self, our awful crimes, our lies?
And when will Freedom come with hope anew
To shine on all the earth from Heaven's skies?
Hope is not lost, nor can we lose the way
As long as we remember how to pray.



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The advertisement is a vertical rectangular sign with a black background and white text. At the top, there is a decorative, ornate logo featuring the letters 'E.N.L.' inside a diamond shape. Below the logo, the name 'Earl N. Levitt' is written in a large, stylized font. Underneath the name, the words 'SHOES CLOTHING' and 'FORMALWEAR' are written in a smaller, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the locations 'LEXINGTON RICHMOND' and 'VIRGINIA' are listed in a small, sans-serif font. The entire sign is framed by a thin white border.

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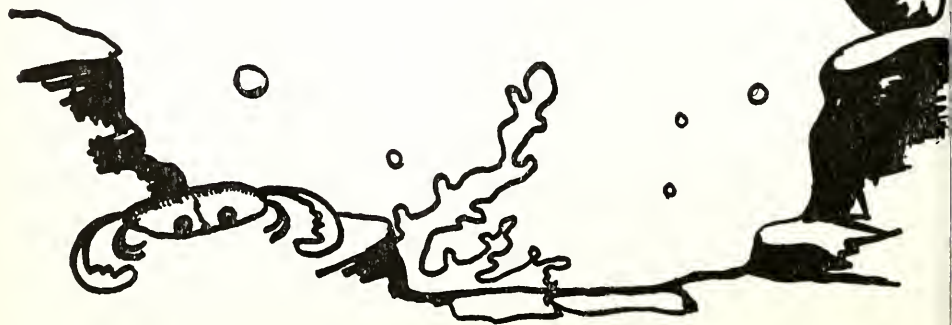
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The ruthless and the reckless sea,
Thief and enemy of man.

The serene sea washes gently
Edges of shimmering sands,
And carefully then it withdraws
Leaving faint fleckings of foam
And watery patches,
Shining coldly, rocking calmly
The fragile cradles of men,
Watching and waiting,
The maternal ocean of strength,
Watery sphinx of nature.



The Night The Star Fell

SLOW mist circled in grey eddies about his feet. He breathed strongly as he walked the path to where the hill burst above the valley's veil to pierce the night beyond. As he stood resting on the summit, he turned his face from the dead town below to the living sky that hung suspended far—so far—above him. The pin point brilliance of the star was mirrored in his eyes, and his silhouette shuddered as he felt the vastness of the crawling heavens. Aching, he flung his arms upward, stretching for the whirling galaxy that seemed to swing a dazzling arc to tempt his groping fingers.

"So still," he whispered, his lips opened, his shoulders tensed. "It's so still." Slowly he lowered his arms, and with his face still turned upward to the star, he slipped to the top of a rock that jutted out from the cliff's edge of the hill, where shattered stone fell to a chasm.

"So still," he whispered again. "It's so still." He touched the cold rock gently. "Down there," he looked behind him, peering into the swirls of fog, "down there the wind roams the streets. The shutters of their houses creak and sway. Their doors clang shut in my face." He frowned and struck at his dusty trousers. "They do not want me;" he pushed long strands of his hair from his eyes. "And yet once—", he let the half thought die, and shrugging away his bitterness he stripped off his shirt and placed it as a pillow for his head, one empty sleeve dangling over the brink of the abyss.

He thought, "If only things had been different. I never wanted anything more than my share, my right. It's not fair," his thoughts snarled. "Others got what they wanted, didn't they? Didn't they?" He worked himself into a bitter sweat. He shouted at the void that engulfed the stars. "I should have a house, with shutters, and a door! Where's mine?" He screamed, his mouth contorted. "Hey, you up there, where's mine?" He glared at the star. It remained cold and unanswering. The indifference of the skies seemed to calm him, and he began to an aimless watching of the stars.

His eyes kept glancing back to one star. He always liked that star: "There," he said to no one. "Do you see it? It's right there under the tip of the Polar star." He repeated it again as he had so often. "See it?" But they hadn't seen it. His mother, his brothers, the men in his platoon, the doctor—none of them had been able to distinguish it from all the others, from all the others. There were thousands, millions of them. The sky whirled with stars. The vague glimmer of something gone flickered in his memory. Gradually he made out the perfect circle of a ferris wheel of stars; and he thought back a day long past, thirty, forty years past.

He had wanted so badly to go with his brothers to the park. From his bedroom window he had been able to see the tip, only the tip, of the new giant ferris wheel. He had seen the big derricks lifting it up in sections that morning, and his ears had rung with the coarse, (but to his childish mind, quite wonderful) language of the laborers.

"Isn't it great!" He had shouted, kicking up his feet with his brothers and mimicking the call of the barker. "It's the most stupendous, giant, colossal ferris wheel ever to come before the public eye!"

Suddenly now as he lay with his bare back against the rough stone, the same wave of disappointment sickened him that had drowned him as a child when he had been forbidden to go.

"Forbidden!" He spit it at the blackness above him. "Me, forbidden! Just another dirty rotten injustice." He tried to remember why they wouldn't let him go. He swore. "There wasn't any reason why I couldn't go. They just didn't want me. It was my right to go. My brothers went." He turned back to the night, but he had lost the star circle.

Irritated, he propped himself up on his elbow and flipped a pebble from the rock, down, down, down. It fell soundlessly, freely. He threw another, an another. It was frightening how quietly they fell.

He didn't like it, so he scuffed his shoes on the loose shale and swore loudly. The words made him laugh. How she hated to hear him swear. "Maria," he sneered, "so soft and refined, so delicate, and helpless." He shot out his little finger and droned in a high falsetto as he poured imaginary tea. "Will you have another cup, Reverend? Harold will be pleased to make another pot. Oh, Harold, do be careful. You're slopping!" Infuriated by the mocking memory of that scene, he pounced sadistically on others. "Harold, when we're married you must stop going to that horrid pub. Harold, don't flick your ashes on the carpet. What will people say?" It was always that one refrain he couldn't stand.

"I don't give a blank-blank-obscurity what people will say!" he had roared. "And don't call me Harold!"

She always answered absently, "Harold, don't swear."

"Maria," her name was sour in his mouth now, "Maria." He rose to pace the hill top restlessly, then stopped. Pulling a limp wallet from his pocket he flipped it open. The moonlight shone hazily on her picture so that his vision was blurred. The moisture welled in his eyes, but he brushed it away. "Damn heat. I'm sweating." It was a lie. It was cold. The stub of what the Germans had left him of his left forefinger traced the crooked tear that ran diagonally across her face. When

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he had knocked on her door this evening—"This evening," he couldn't believe it had been only this evening, this day, this week, this year. "It was so long ago." He had just come back. "I was four years in the stinking infantry," his hand brushed his nose carelessly, "four stinking, lousy years marching, digging trenches, getting shot at, marching, digging trenches, getting shot at. And what did they give me for all that? He squeezed the wallet in his hand but could hardly bend it. "This!" He threw the wallet down and flourished his maimed finger above his head. "To reward me, me a draftsman, they give a hand that can't hold a pencil! This is my reward after I gave them—everything." He repeated it softly, "Everything, even my Maria." The last was inaudible, "Maria."

He whirled to face the fog that curtained the town, his hand clenched. "It was my right, my right!" The echo came to him tauntingly. "MY RIGHT—My Right—my right." His hands tried to shut out the ringing in his ears.

"MY RIGHT—My Right—my right."

"I gave them EVERYTHING—Everything—everything."

"what will people say—What Will People Say—WHAT WILL PEOPLE SAY?"

"Stop it." He dropped to his knees and buried his head in his arms. "Stop it, stop it." His crippled fingers groped for the wallet. Feverishly he tore it open to her picture.

There was her face with the same hair, the same eyes, the same nose. He had stared at that picture during the weeks at the hospital. All the time they had been digging the shrapnel out of him he'd kept saying, "Hurry, hurry. I've got to get back to my girl. Yeah, I've got a girl, Maria." He said it again now. "Hurry." But he needn't have worried about her changing, not her looks. When she had opened the door she had looked just the same. He needn't have worried.

She was surprised, "Harold!"

"Hello, Maria."

"Why, Harold, do come in. So nice of you to stop by on your way home. You did just get back?" She was really surprised. He could tell by the way she fumbled with the buttons on her dress.

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"Yeah, train just came in ten minutes ago. I had to walk up from the station." He had gone into the living room and found the Reverend sipping tea. He had hoped to be alone with her so he only nodded curtly. It was embarrassing for a minute. She had just stood there, and he had thought for a second that she was going to cry. He wished she would. Maybe the Reverend would leave. But she hadn't cried, so he had said, "Excuse us, Reverend. I'd like to talk to Maria alone for a minute if you don't mind."

"Not at all." The Reverend set his cup and saucer on the table. "I'll just sneak some more muffins from the kitchen while you do." He winked. "My wife makes excellent blueberry muffins."

"My wife!" How that echoed in his ears. With two loving words his world crumbled. All the years in the trenches, the agony in the hospital, all the nagging he had endured before the war, all had been useless. She was married.

"Lost," he cried. "Oh, damned injustice, she was mine!" The tears wet his face and muddled the earth as he pressed his cheek and palms to its damp surface. "She was mine."

"MINE—Mine—mine."

He had raved and screamed at her. But they had shut the door in his face, shut and bolted the door. In utter despair he had gone to the window and pleaded with her. They had bolted and shuttered it too. He had gone to the pub.

"Just closing, sir. Sorry, sir."

He had gone home. The door was closed and locked for the night. "Let me in." He pounded and rattled the brass knocker. "Let me in."

"Pipe down, buddy."

"Shut up out there."

"Aw, go to sleep."

The neighbors thrust angry heads out of their windows, but when he tried to speak to them they slammed their shutters. So he had trudged up the long path to the hill. So he had come to the chasm. But he was afraid, very afraid. Sobbing, he drew himself to the brink and looked down—down. There was nothing. "I can't. I can't." It was little more than a harsh whisper. "Even though she laughs at me, I can't." He clutched his ears once more, her voice ringing in his head.

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"Coward, coward."

"Damn, you!" he shrieked. "Damn your black soul." Then he was rolling the swear words with his tongue, vomiting them into the blackness, searing the dirt he ground between his hands, purging his heart of all its despair, leaving nothing—only nothing.

For a long while he felt no emotion. He was empty of feeling, of life. Sprawled with his forearm flung across his eyes, he lay on the rocky crag like some writhing insect impaled on the point of a pin beneath the microscope of the sky. Then something stirred mothlike within him. As it festered, the life grew in his body with a vengeance. He rose slowly.

"She has taken my past. The years I have spent are nothing. They have left me nothing." He thrust his empty hands in front of him. "The present is nothing. This day, this night, all are nothing." He jutted his chin forward and turned his terrible face to the stars. "It was my right to have a wife, to have a trade." He slammed his fist against his chest. "I'm human too. I'm no worse than the rest of Them." His lips froze in a horrid, mocking grimace. "The past—the present—gone!" His mouth twisted. "The future alone is mine still. And I will take my future." His chopped finger pointed at the star.

"You," he decided, "you are My Star. You will guide me to my revenge. That is my future. That is—." He broke off, his mouth gaping, the saliva slipping from his lips.

Above him where the planets swung dizzily in the blackness of space, the star moved. Silently it fell—down—down—down, smaller, and smaller, until it was snuffed out by the horizon.

He wanted to run. He turned to run, but his heel caught on his shirt and he tottered on the edge of the abyss.

* * *

Down, down the path he ran. Faster, faster, he had to get away. "I've got to get away. I've got to get away." The fog muffled his foot steps. It tore at his lungs. He was gasping. The houses of the village streets swam nebulous before him, and as he passed they crumbled, their brick dust and broken plaster curling like the mist.

He reached his Mother's house and threw himself at the door, tearing at it with his nails. "Let me in, let me in." It was open. He swayed to the stairs and grasped the newel post for support. He was safe. But it was dark and he didn't want dark. He wanted light, candles, people. "Light, light," the words were tortured. Through the gloom he could make out the buffet in the corner. There would be candles and matches in the drawer.

"Don't, Harold."

He whirled. "Who was that?" Nothing answered. "Mother?" There was only the blackness and the faint outline of a chair.

"Stop it, Harold," patiently.

"Mother?"

A woman rose from the chair and plucked a child from her skirts. She was too young, too pretty, for his mother. The light was so dim. "Who are you?"

"Mother, I want to go *now*," the child tugged at the woman's apron.

"Not now, dear. Be patient and you may go with your brothers this evening."

"You damned blank-blank—obscenity! I want to go *now*!" The boy swung his foot viciously at his mother's legs.

"Little barbarian!" He pushed the child from his path and caught the woman's arm. "Who are you?" he asked angrily. "Where's my mother?"

The child tore them apart. "I want to go *now*." Fretfully, peevishly, it tore her sleeve.

"You spoiled brat," he shook it. "You don't deserve to go at all." He could barely make out the child's features, but he froze when the boy screamed in answer, "It is my right. My brothers are going."

In horror he loosed the child, and when it ran pointing to the window, he saw that it was himself.

"No, no." He turned away in terror, his eyes straining. "Maria, help me, help me." Somehow he got the door open and ran into the street, into the fog. "Maria, Maria, help me. Save me." Like a driven man, he fled. Panting and choking, he reached her door and scratched at the lock.

"Maria, let me in, please!" The oaken panels would not move. "The window!" He leapt to the shutters. They swung open slowly, and in the semi-darkness within he could see a man sitting opposite Maria. Her back was to the window, "Maria," he called, "Maria, let me in."

She didn't look up. The man was trying to pour some tea for a guest, but in his ill humor he had carelessly spilled it on the clerical garments of the stranger. "Maria, don't bother with it now! Let me in." He tried to reach the sill but it was too high to climb in. The man was swearing, and even across the room he could smell the whiskey on the man's breath. "Maria, Maria."

"Harold, please don't swear. What will people say?"

The man looked up and roared, "I don't give a damn what people will say."

"No," he stared wildly through the window, and the last thing he saw before the wind blew the shutter closed was himself.

Up, up he ran, back up the long, long path to the hill, feet scrabbling in the loose dirt, eyes fixed on the heavens. He reached the top of the rock and stood arms outstretched to the sky. Then he saw it, high above his finger tips was the star.

* * *

Then he lost his balance completely, and vanished over the edge. DOWN - Down - down, he fell, silently, soundlessly, like a pebble tossed from the sky.

CAROLYN SCOTT

An Idea

An idea . . . resembles a pinpoint of light.
The larger it becomes, the brighter the glow.

The Diplomat

ACCORDING to visiting firemen otherwise pounding the podium
Even a chemistry major (more exuberant over Uranium
Than launching a thousand ships like the dazzling Helenic)
It "astonishing!", marvels the Washington Senator (we think
he is rather eccentric).
He sings of the beauty so consistently flaunted by the
incredible intellectual Sweet Briarites—
O to be twenty and wifeless again which calls to mind ladies
the subject tonight:
So drones the notable lecturer's ode orating an
Institutional plight
Of Uniting Politically in a word universal . . . (Quite right sir
quite right sir quite right.)
Exit Senator, applause ringing in his ears.

Gretchen



GRETCHEN set two tea cups on their saucers with a gentle clink. As long as she could remember there had been only these two cups. She thought them very lovely with their pale gray design of cornflowers and intricate handles—so intricate that the little finger would not fit through—one just thought it would. Aunt Joss would like them and Aunt Joss was coming to pay a visit.

Gretchen had to wait now. The tea cups were ready, the water hot, and her color dishes and canvasses stacked in the corner. Claspings her hands she crossed to the window. She could hear her Aunt Joss already, "Dear, it is *such* a pity you have only one window, and merely for ventilation—it does cut down on it so—though I must admit the view's perfectly dreadful."

Gretchen looked out to the warehouses and docks. It wasn't lovely, yet it was sort of wonderful to see the towers man had built up into the sky. It was magnificent beyond, where there were great rents of washed sky; rain water was still pouring down the gutters. Gretchen leaned out over her geraniums and breathed clean air where the exhaust of city life was lost on the way of the wind. A single gull was flattened and spun in the gale.

"If I could capture all this once, just once—," she felt urged to unstack all her paints in her desire to spend a life time painting skies, soaring with them. Her deep eyes shone wide and her pale face smiled. She would love her solitude forever. She would love her frayed two room flat.

But she could not push her door shut. She was not strong enough to bar it. She gripped the sill, imagining Aunt Joss's step and the slight clicking of pearl

strands accompanied by her little social "ahems." "Well, Dearie, and how is my poor little struggling artist? Are you into the circles yet?"

A sudden sickening feeling came over Gretchen, like the feeling she got from cheap powder. She leaned out the window further, looking down for some contact with the world below. But it was all too far down. Humanity seemed a mere scattering of tiny beads. She saw taxi-bettles scudding down the alleys. She heard her Aunt's voice again.

"Gretchen, do take that blank expression off your face. It's *so* childish, day-dreaming. I really begin to despair!"

"I begin to despair too," she thought. Gretchen had always been alone, as remote to others at a tea party as at a subway station. She wanted to be. She turned away from people when her large somber eyes drew those possessive personalities. She turned away like a tame fawn in a city, a fawn captured after it had just learned to bound over fallen trees. Gretchen had been just old enough never to forget her hills. They would still hover beyond the warehouses and crowds.

She knew that Aunt Joss would have despaired of her long ago but she hung on to the slight social pleasure attached to her "little charity orphan." When she talked about her on the telephone or at meetings her nose always wrinkled like some pet mouse's, smelling attention. Gretchen gripped the sill, imagining how it would be.

"My dear, if you *knew* what I've lavished on that poor child! It's just crushing. I introduce her into the best social circles, but she merely turns around in her naive way and says she doesn't understand it. Really, you wonder how much of that innocence is put on. There's not an ounce of sophistication in her. . . . Dear Gretchen is quite stuck on this arty trend now. She insisted on this low class flat and there she is struggling all by herself. . . . I've made several friendly visits just for a chat, you know. Someday I feel she'll want to confide in me. . . . Yes, yes, I know you must go. I'll let you know. I do hate to lower myself to that section of town, though. . . . Yes, the dear child's waiting. Goodby."

Gretchen wished Aunt Joss wouldn't make her "little visits." It was so like charity. Gretchen didn't want it. Would Aunt Joss ever understand? Perhaps she would soon give up trying to draw her into those smoke-filled reception rooms.

"Gretchen, dear, just as a little hint—try some rouge, and I think a more severe hair-do would be a bit more mature than that fringe."

The wind was clearing the sun. Its light spread over her, slanting her shadow into the room. It was dry and frisky now, barely ruffling her geraniums but it did not enter the room. "How silly I am, how idiotic this civilization." She stretched her arms out the window, encompassing New York with its ugly factories producing modern beauty products, its slums crowding against its art galleries. "Though I am a nobody to them I do not care. This evening I shall walk down to the East River and sit on the benches and sketch the old men watching the river tugs." How dramatic it made her life—just seeing life, seeing New York flare up at night. She felt she could interpret through her colors—see beyond the superficiality. Such power had a perfume like wind.

Gretchen whirled away from the window, her eyes out of focus with the dingy atmosphere of her studio. She heard the kettle blowing steam and the short-of-breath steps on the stairs. She walked to the door and quietly slid the bolt, then stood with her hands over her ears as the knocking began.

10-8 SECONDS OF ETERNITY

THE element G,
 Structured regularly so far as we know,
 Structured regularly as we can ascertain structure,
 And mind you, no structure is completely ascertained,
 The element G is of incomprehensible
 Neutrality.
 We understand neutrality no better than death or peace,
 It's synonyms. But that is a digression—
 To return. The element G.

It's structure!
 The nucleus, neutronic, protonic,
 The nucleus positively charged,
 The nucleus center of activity,
 (And to understand the livid activity of
 Complete Neutrality
 Is to understand the essence of God),
 The nucleus: weight, mass, positivity.
 Significant, positivity, but rather dull.
 Positivity encircled, the tumultuous spheres of the electrons,
 Multi-dimensional,
 Inter-mingled,
 Energized levels of negativity,
 Charged
 But almost weightless.
 Electrons, the speed of space.

That is the atomic structure of God.

Or almost.

The positron has no practical purpose,
That which is practical being that which is understandable,
Comprehensible to human intelligence.
So perhaps the positron is practical after all.
The positron:
Atomic,
Protonic,
Electronic,
Transitional,
With characteristics of positivity and characteristics of negativity.
In atomic disintegration,
In the change of mass to energy, energy to mass,
The positron lives briefly, very briefly,
In time—
10-8 seconds.

So man, partaking of the essence of the atom of God,
Man without practical purpose so far as human intelligence can
understand,
Man with characteristics of positivity, characteristics of negativity,
Lives briefly,
Very briefly,
10-8 seconds of eternity,
10-8 seconds of the life of God.



CAROLYN SCOTT

Friendship

A DEEP and lasting friendship is like an evergreen tree. The rose, while yet more beautiful, fades with the first snow of winter.

HALF-PENNY

HERE I sit, gazing at a half-penny.
It has the face of George the Sixth upon it.
The face of George fades . . .
I see another.
 The night was clear,
 The night was gay,
 We whirled and whirled
 Until we had whirled away.
Smoke collects around the light-bulb
As though trying to retain its formless shape.
The wind picks up leaves in front of the Plaza Hotel
 at Fifty-ninth and Fifth Avenue.
They bubble up in a muted cyclone
And make hats appear somber and boorish.
The policeman herds the cattle across the street
I am one of that confused herd.
Alone with the mob.
Alone with myself.
So alone that I am overpowered with myself.
 The night was clear,
 The night was gay,
 We whirled and whirled
 Until we had whirled away.

DAWN TO DUSK ON THREE THOUSAND ACRES

FACTUAL travelogues and periodicals can be found concerning Rhodesia, but here I am not going to advertise. This is a small piece from a life I know on Porta.

The Southern Cross tips the horizon, leaving a sky yet studded with stars. A gentle breeze rustles the leaves of the Mahash to tell the earth that the dawn approaches. But in this month of September it is the winds and not the dawn which indicates the rising hour. Since half-past-three, thirty natives have been dropping fertilizer into prepared holes. The boss-boy, Joseph, yawns sleepily and upon spying one of his lethargic charges lagging behind, he cracks his stick abruptly against the side of his leg.

Disturbed by the sudden noise, a buck rises from its warm bed of grass and tests the wind through a cold, black nose. With a twitch of its tail it leaps gracefully in the opposite direction through the dew-sodden grass. One of the boys shouts "mberiri," and an assagai is thrown in the direction of the buck. Simultaneously the manager appears at the other end of the land and Joseph blurts out a scolding, with misgivings, and the gang returns to its task. Yes, they are rationed with plenty of meat, but hunting is good sport and a natural instinct, and this is Saturday which means a compound party tonight.

The wind increases, blowing the fertilizer as it drops into the holes, and thus, to prevent waste, the order is given to return to their kias and to knock off until 8 o'clock. The dust from the road settles on the natives' legs as they tread the dry earth which has seen no rain for eight months, and as they reach the compound, the sun peers boldly over the horizon, casting a pink hue onto the veldt and its members. Smoke rises from one or two cooking fires near the pole and daga huts, since most of the gang will have but a cup of tea now, a little sudza for lunch; and their big meal will be tonight.

The sun, accompanied by that cold period at dawn, has perhaps invigorated Joseph, for as he walks, he sings a rythmical soprano, holding one hand in a ragged pocket and sacrificing the other to the cold nip in the air, in order to display the symbolic stick in time to his singing. But the frantic crying of a picanin halts his joyous mood, and he sees his wife struggling to overcome the limitations of her long sarong by jogging down the path towards him, with one of their offspring in her arms. Apparently it fell into the fire over which she was going to prepare the quota of Saturday night Kaffir beer. The "umfazi" finishes her explanation above the anguished yelling, and the three proceed to the "maqulu kiya" where mother will treat the burns. I have heard people say, "Don't you get bored on a farm?" Such a speaker may learn that from at least six in the morning until late at night, living on these acres is a life within lives.

Later on in the day the dank odor of arsenic rises from the dripping bodies of three hundred head of cattle, which seek refuge in the shade from the unmerciful sun. This dipping may divert the ticks for a few days, but the flies still come in hoards, and neither the swishing of wet tails nor the tossing of heads discourages them. Young picanins run here and there trying to keep order by cracking their shamboks proudly and pausing for frequent rests beneath the all blue gums and the shady mahabahabas. After their coats have dried off, the oxen are sorted out by Norium, a tall Mashona with Zulu ancestors. He yokes them to the ox-cart which has been refilled with sacks of fertilizer to take to the lands. On his way he meets several "umfazies," each carrying either a five gallon tin of water on her turbaned head, or armfuls of wood and plants called "Repoker," which are put into the beer to aid fermentation. A baby on its mother's back gurgles every now and then when a little water tipples out from the tin. It is perhaps remarkable how little water is spilt, this being due to the giraffe-like movement of the women.

Way down on the southern boundary Cigarette unbends his aged self to the call of the "go'way" bird, and soon afterwards the welcome voice of the gong drifts across the veldt. With hands that are nearly as dried and hard as his feet, he gathers the remaining barbed wire, but in remembering his weather-beaten old hat, he calmly forgets the pinchers and this means another invoice at the Farmer's Co-op in Salisbury, since the tool will surely be gone by the morrow. "That which is my brother's' is mine too," says a boy.

The hot afternoon creeps around to the cool of the evening through the rationing of food, and the daily jobs such as watering the bananas and the paw-paw, feeding the pigs and the mending of a boy's fortune, his bicycle. Tonight many of the natives will shed their work rags and don a Sunday attire (shoes are not usually included) and set off on their bicycles to some other compound party.

Accompanied by the first beat of a drum rolling out through the stillness to the other side of the valley, the farm's clock sinks below the horizon. A leopard, silhouetted against the golden sky, stands near a group of twisted Masasa trees on the kopjie just below the compound. For a while it watches and listens curiously. Dusk settles with a calm; a nightjar calls; the leopard turns and ambles away.

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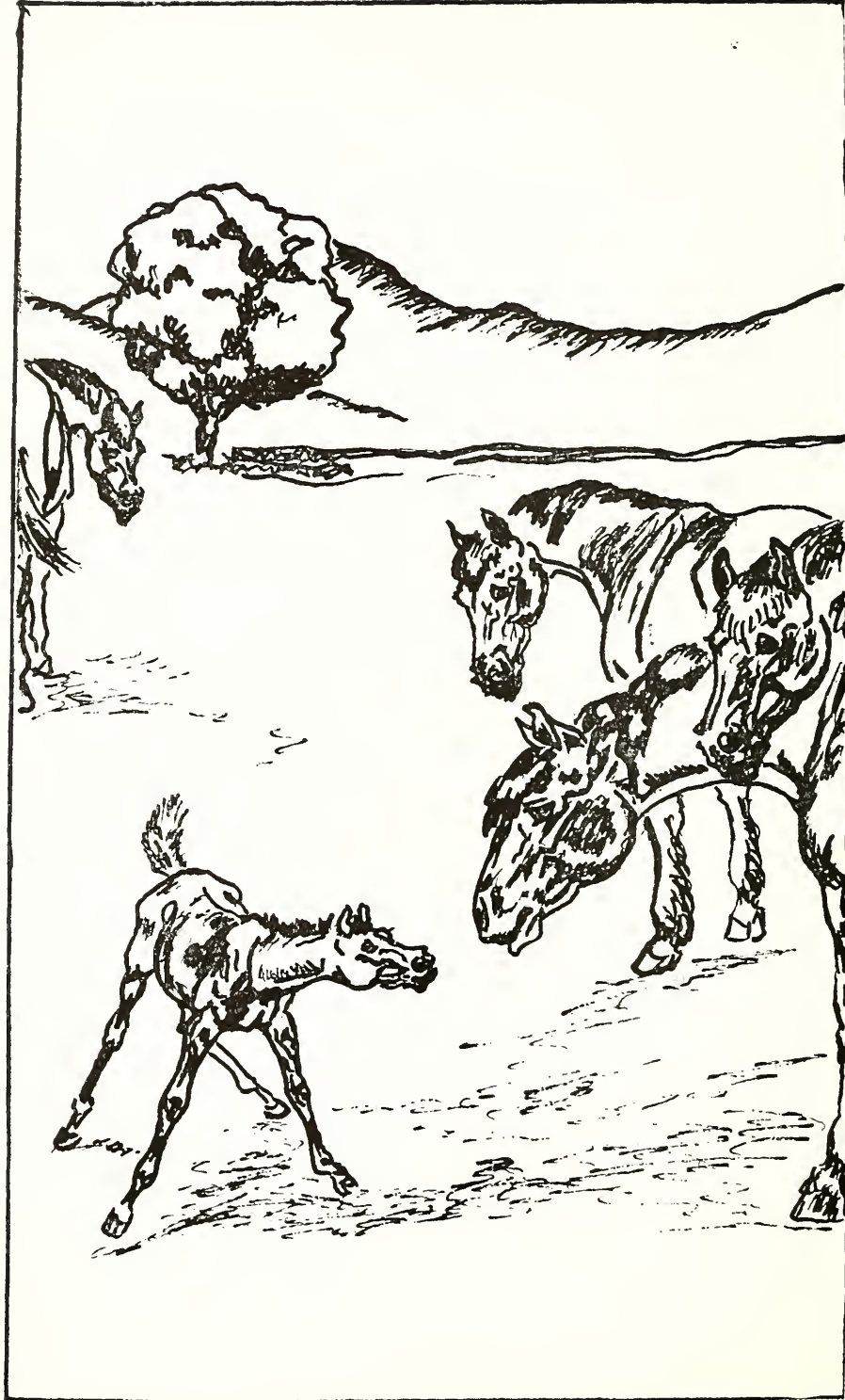
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The Gift

SHE had one more day. She was too exhausted now to do more than repeat this thought with every movement. It followed her as she rinsed the last shirt and hung it with the others, only half filling the fraying line. She knew it wasn't enough—it would scarcely bring her the money for one meal. She stared hopelessly at her hands, red and puffy from the water, trying to convince herself that she could have done no better. No one else in the building could afford to pay for laundry: she had gotten these only because people were sorry for her.

She jerked erect, remembering that there was only one day before Ellie's birthday, and she had no gift. It meant so much to the child, now that she was sick; all she had talked about for weeks had been her birthday and the doll. This doll, an imagined fairy princess with golden curls and a satin gown, had become an obsession with Ellie—it was all she wanted from life. With familiar rising panic, the woman realized she might actually get nothing else from life—every day her child grew more thin and weak. Despair overcame the terror; she tried weakly to push it out of her mind, but she could think only of how beautiful Ellie had looked before. Before—sometimes it was hard to remember that there had once been another kind of life, without the vacuum of tomorrows, filling slowly with fear . . .

Ellie had been a pretty baby; she was breathtaking when she was three years old. Her tight black curls were always tossed and tangled by her strenuous, unceasing motion: she was never still, and she laughed even more than she talked. It was not until she was asleep that one noticed how small and delicate she was. Her mother loved her best then, but it frightened Danny to see her still and pale. He wanted her to be laughing as he always laughed, for they were exactly alike. Life to them was a tremendously pleasant joke: they had no serious thoughts. At times she was jealous of them, so complete together, but Danny had always noticed her hurt, throwing his arm around her and drawing her into the happiness. That was what she remembered most: his gentleness and the way his eyes smiled at her even when his face was still. She saw again their first meeting . . .

The memory faded as a soft call from Ellie sent her rushing into the bedroom, which was crowded with a bed, straight chair and small table. She watched the child turn toward her with the careful slowness of one accustomed to pain, smiling patiently when she brought a cup of the watery soup which had made up their lunch for several weeks. It was good that Danny couldn't see them now—he would barely recognize his happy, active daughter in this pale, weak child, and the unending, futile strain of responsibility had changed her own nature, always serious to a grim hopelessness.

As soon as Ellie had finished her soup, she hurried to the kitchen to wash the few dishes, knowing that she could not answer the eager waiting look in Ellie's eyes when she thought of the doll. The child was sure: it was unbearable. She had always expected too much, for Danny had spoiled her. He had never come home without some present for her: chewing gum, a penny sucker, a hair ribbon. She had tried to do the same, but that was long ago. Ellie remembered, but she never mentioned it.

She was stacking the dishes when Mrs. Newman rattled the door and entered. She was breathing heavily from the long climb, but she did not wait to speak. Her eyes, swollen from sleeplessness and tears, blinked continually as she sputtered out her words.

"Gone again! Ever since last night and this time he swears it's the end! Just went roaring out of here without so much as a 'good bye' but of course he was too drunk to know much what he was saying. Why, Charlotte, you never saw the likes of it—him breaking chairs and cursing and raving—took all the money too, of course. It was hid, but he can smell it out every time. Just these two fives were left—don't see how he could've missed them. Well, this time I'm through! Finished, I tell you—I'm leaving! I don't even want him to come back! I mean it, Charlotte, I mean it!"

Her voice grew shrill and raucous, and Charlotte shrugged slightly and moved away. This had happened many times now: after a proper amount of sympathy, she always abandoned her threats of leaving, and quietly awaited her husband's return. Charlotte listened vaguely as she cleaned the kitchen, until the woman, sensing her lack of interest, cried:

"You just don't know how lucky you are to have a husband honorably dead. Just look where you'd be now—like me, half crazy with worry and never knowing where the next meal—"

She broke off as Charlotte slumped down into the chair, crying convulsively. As the woman reached out her hand to touch her shoulder, she jerked backwards, speaking harshly, her voice controlled so that Ellie would not hear.

"So I'm *lucky*! With no food in the house, no money in the house, no way to get any money, my child weaker every day—she needs care! She needs hope—and I have to kill the only hope she has left. I cannot even give her a birthday present, and it means more to her than a good meal, or even a chance to walk again. All she talks about is a doll, and I can't even feed her. My child! And you dare to say I'm lucky because Danny is dead. Lucky! Oh, if you knew, my God, if you knew—". Sobs strangled her words, and she rushed from the room.

Mrs. Neuman stood in the kitchen, hearing the hard sobs melt into silence. She moved to the door, perplexed; she returned slowly, guiltily, at Ellie's plaintive cry: "Mummie? What is it? Did I do something? Mummie?" Gently she placed one of the bills on the table and went down the stairs, shaking her head and blinking her eyes more rapidly.

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Charlotte found the money, turning it over and over, bitterly ashamed. She crushed it angrily—the woman had thought she was begging! And she had let that self-centered gossip feel sorry for her—that was the worst. Her pride writhed under her bitter accusations, and she hated the gift. She looked up at a sudden cry from Ellie and hurried toward the bedroom. Just at the door she remembered the money clutched in her hand, and understood the woman's apology. With a quick smile she smoothed out the bill, folded it and slid it into her pocket, and stepped into the child's room.

"Yes, darling, what do you want?"

"I'm tired, Mummie. I want you to play with me. Are you all right now?"

"Everything's fine now, sweetheart. Mummie can't play with you right now—she's going out. Don't be unhappy, dear." With a catch in her breath, she added, "Tomorrow's your birthday!" She hurried out before the question came, glad that she had dared to pledge herself to Ellie.

The department store was far away; she walked, but she did not notice the distance. The brightness of the day and the brightness of her hope ruled her thoughts, and led them back to the early days of her marriage. It had been quite a change to her, managing her own household: she had come from a poor family, but there had been many older children and she had never taken any responsibility. She had been so pleased when Danny had helped her—he had known how to do anything. He had taught her how to have fun—walking, skating, dancing, talking: she learned to be at ease, and she had been happy. Of course, Danny had never liked one job for very long, but she had understood that he needed experience in different fields: Danny knew all about money anyway—he took care of all that.

Everything had been so safe, so secure—she had been unable to comprehend her poverty after the accident. For weeks she had waited, expectant, for the lost money to appear; she had finally accepted that there was none, but she had known that it had not been Danny's fault. She had told her family, but they had been so dreadful about it that of course she could never go to them for help. Why, that would be almost agreeing that Danny had been wrong. She had been lonely for a time, but Ellie had made up for all but Danny: she didn't even miss them any more.

Her steps became slower and wearier as she thought of the day they had first moved to a cheaper apartment. She had been terribly alone, in those rooms which Danny had never entered. She had hated their ugliness and emptiness: she would not have believed then that she could live as she lived now.

Doyle
Florist

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THE COLUMNS

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She had worked as a salesgirl: it had been hard for her, but she had made enough to keep them well, if not happy. When the staff had been reduced, she had not been able to find work for several weeks; then she had washed dishes in a small diner. It was horrible—she had been almost glad that she had to stay home while Ellie had gotten sick, but the debts had terrified her, and the increasingly frequent moves to cheaper apartments. Jobs were impossible to find now: she had almost lost hope. She fought now for Ellie's hope. She could not let the child lose her faith—she had nothing else.

Discouraged now, but even more determined, she reached the store, and the toy department. She stood aside for a few moments, looking at the vast display of games, gadgets, toys, and stuffed animals. She stepped closer, to a silky black and white rabbit. Gently she touched him, wanting him for Ellie; wanting him for herself. He was round and soft, like the muff she had always wanted. She left him, wondering how her child could prefer a doll, but knowing that there was no other possibility in Ellie's mind.

She saw them, in a long row of all shapes and sizes. She glanced over them quickly, seeing only a few that would fit Ellie's dream. As she looked at these, she narrowed her choice carefully: one was too plain; another had ugly hair; this one had no style; that was dressed poorly. Only one seemed right in every way. She was delicately regal, with painted china features, smooth golden hair, and a pale blue satin gown trimmed with lace. Charlotte methodically looked at all the others, smiling at their cheapness and ugliness compared to the Princess. She returned happily to the table where the doll stood alone. She examined the silver slippers, the blue velvet cape and hat, and the tiny pearl necklace. She was as thrilled as Ellie would be: the strain of worry and despair was over—she would not lose Ellie's trust.

She smoothed a wrinkle in the skirt, and the price tag flipped into view: fifteen dollars.

She stood unbelieving, unbreathing. She began to laugh noiselessly, without comprehension. She had not thought about the price. Two dollars had seemed to her a fortune to spend on a present; she should have known that she could never buy a doll like this one—so beautiful, so perfect. If only she had never seen her—now she could only hate the cheaper dolls. She must choose one that she had scorned, laughed at. She forced herself to look at a doll with ill-fitting cotton

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clothes. At least the soft curls were there, although her face was ugly. Charlotte forced herself to look at the price—ten dollars. She turned blindly away from the table, forcing back a wave of nausea. She walked quickly toward the ugliest doll she could see: a few frizzled strands of hair surrounded a blank, flat face; on the coarse, straight skirt was a tag—six dollars.

She could no longer fight back the tears. Humiliated, she brushed past the anxious salesgirl, running out of the store. She walked quickly, desperately, with no destination: only a purpose. She would not go home without a doll.

She closed the door quietly behind her, but then she saw that Ellie was still awake. She pulled her shoes from her swollen feet with one hand, clutching a package in the other. She realized that they had had no dinner; she was too exhausted to care that there was nothing to eat in the house. She looked down at the package for several minutes without seeing it. Then she walked slowly to the bedroom, forcing her lips into a thin, nervous smile, the rest of her face stiff with terror that Ellie would not like her present. In answer to the child's eager, questioning look, she placed the package on the bed and turned away, afraid to watch her unwrap it. She stared at her hands as she heard the paper slip to the floor, but she had to look during the long silence that followed. Ellie was holding the black and white rabbit, neither liking nor disliking: merely unbelieving. The woman wanted to scream that there were no dolls as beautiful as her dream, that she had looked everywhere, that the rabbit was just as good, that— But she could only watch, unbreathing, until she saw Ellie's finger gently explore the silky fur, and saw the slow smile that spread over the child's face as she accepted its softness. Only then could she weep, exhausted, as Ellie pressed her face against the rabbit, and worried what to name him.

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Daybreak's verse.

Yawning daisies

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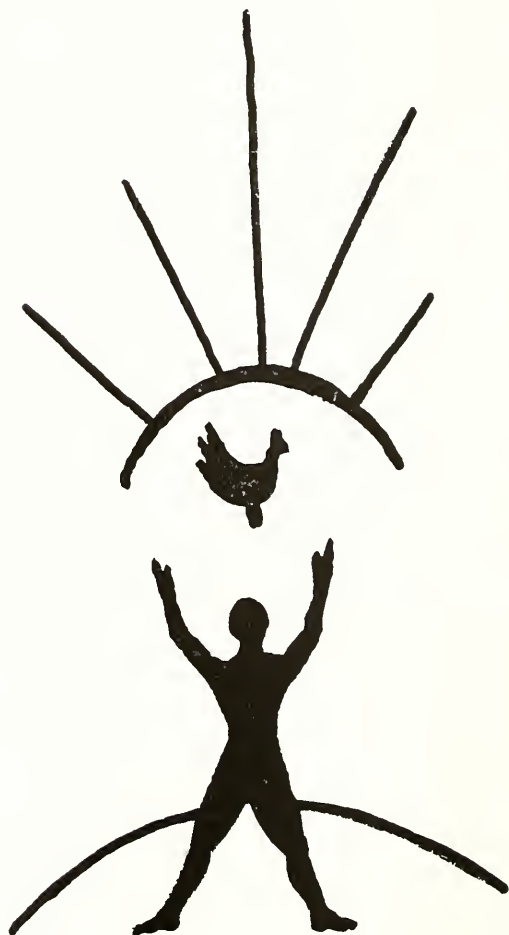
Cloudbanked frieze.

Boastful warbler

Rustling tree

Jubilant earth—

And ME.



How The Angelfish Got His Name

A LONG long time ago . . . so long, in fact, that it was only the fourth day of the new world, all of the newly created fish, fowl and animals were gathered in the vestibule of the Great Hall of Heaven awaiting their orders. There was much flapping of unused wings, and excited whispering about what all this could mean . . . but no one was quite sure.

When the noise grew to such proportions that even the vast building seemed to be bursting with it, an angel lighted on one of the golden steps and bade everyone hush. Then, when every wing was calmed and the last small whisper silenced, the angel sang to them all the story of the creation and explained that a wonderful thing called life was to be given to them. At the end of the speech, however, the angel cautioned them about the seriousness of this gift of life . . . that it must be paid for by giving two things and accepting another.

Not knowing exactly what the angel meant, and because they were so truly young, they grew impatient and stormed through the doors into the Great Hall without waiting to hear the end of the angel's speech . . . all except one little fish who had been created with a little too much shyness. It stood in the doorway and watched.

The angel noticed a great tear running down the little fish's face and understood the human thing called loneliness. He felt a certain sadness and picked the little fish up, holding it close.

"You shall stay here with me," he said, comfortingly, and he brought it to his own star, gave the fish a kiss and it was home there.

During the time that followed, the angel and the fish watched the rest of the Creation and prayed at night, when each star became bright enough for God to see, that all would go well with the new world. But it did not look as if it would.

First Adam and Eve at the apple. Then Cain slew Abel. Everyone in heaven could tell that God was very distressed. The angel's fish worried about it all too . . . and wondered.

One day, when the Heavenly Host seemed even sadder than before and when God Himself was talking about ending the world right then, the little fish asked the angel:

"Why did they all rush into the Great Hall before they had heard everything you were saying when it means so much sadness for them now?"

"Do you mean they didn't hear me?" cried the angel in great consternation.

"No. Everyone left before you finished talking."

The angel turned paler than mist, picked up the fish and rushed over to the Great Hall. The others gathered in the hall watching the angel approach the Great Throne.

"Excuse me, sir," he said to God, who sat mournfully looking down into the sky, "but I think I know why everything is going wrong upon the earth. It is my fault."

"Oh no!" cried the fish, "It is ours . . . all of us that were supposed to listen."

"Whatever are you talking about?" asked God, looking down at the two excited visitors.

The angel explained quietly. He repeated all he recalled of his speech and of how the creatures on earth were living without understanding life, that they had been too anxious to listen to advice.

"Ah," sighed God, "That anxiousness is a quality they received too much of. It was their undoing."

"Perhaps," answered the angel, "but they are down there without purpose. They can be told."

"Who can tell them now?" the Great Being asked.

Everyone in the Hall sighed miserably . . . for they all knew that only a mortal could tell them. The little fish, however, looked around at them all, smiled bravely at his beloved angel and hesitantly offered:

"I could tell them."

The angel smiled at the little fish.

"But then you could never come back to us," he said, with sadness clouding the pride in his voice.

"I know," answered the fish. Then, as it looked around the Great Hall once again, it smiled and continued: "But I wasn't really meant to live here. I've had so much more than all the others. Perhaps I owe it to them, and if that be the case, then my fault is terribly much greater than theirs."

God smiled down at the little fish but shook his head doubtfully. "You could probably tell the lesser beings," He explained, "but I have given man dominion over even you."

Those who heard His quiet words looked down at the world below them.

God sighed again; "I shall have to send a man to them," He mused, "but they are not ready."

"However," He continued, "You, little fish, though you cannot speak to man, are full of simple wisdom and understanding. Until I can send someone to all mankind, there is no need for the animals and others to go on the way they are. I could send you down to tell them, and perhaps, perhaps even some people will be wise enough to follow the simple example you and yours will set."

Tension seemed to evaporate from the hall. Even the little fish, in his sadness at leaving this happy place, felt the awful goodness of God.

The angel then said: "Sir, It is a wonderful decision, and I believe this little messenger is better qualified than even any of us, for has he not proven, by his own words, that he has fulfilled the three things you desire?"

The little fish blushed.

And God said: "I shall slip you into the waters of the flood during the next forty days and nights. You shall be near a great ark into which I have asked Noah, the best of all the men, to place all of the animals I wish to live. It shall be your privilege to tell them that it is not enough to be merely alive; that they must give to me, and all that is mine, faith and love; that they must accept the responsibility of living in a world that constantly needs to be reminded of the need for faith and love. This is yours to tell them for I know you understand.

And after He had spoken, God rose from his great Throne and took the angel's fish in his hand and walked out of the Hall. Behind them the Heavenly choir sang joyfully, and all of the others applauded the angelfish . . . for that was what he was called from then on.

NIGHT

THE stars were hard bright dewdrops
Flung skyward by the trees,
In slim dark branches slingshots
Were drawn back by the breeze;
They fought a noiseless battle,
Hurling stones of light,
Until at dawn they routed
The giant-night.

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EDITORS' NOTE: *For the first time in many years, THE BRAMBLER has been opened to contributions from faculty members. This poem by Mr. Ben Reid, Instructor of English, was solicited by the editors. All contributions from the faculty are welcomed.*

BEN REID

In Memory of Wallace Stevens

BRONZE was what he talked about
(‘Bronze man . . . released from destruction . . .
At the azury center of time’)
Yet all I could see was gold—
Grecian gold, wreathing the actuarial man,
Breathing his rheumy, tabulated breath
In the antechambers of our death.
Rattling the mace of his mentality
On the tables of our mortality,
He stood bright and devoted, but old.

Old men, be **my** Anchises.

Your necessary angel of the mind
Took grave dimensions of any life but this,
Measured the still point from St. Louis,
The marvelous Irishman’s wheeling gyres,
Found them statistically insignificant—
Uninsurable, like any other act of God.

You lived strong, Father Stevens:
 Trained your eyes' vaulting ravens
 To pierce mystical endowments,
 Taught your skeptical agents
 To convert those policies to straight
 Life, a period of grace, then payment;
 While you chaired our academy of right
 Sensation in robes of rational raiment.

Reason is not salvation?
 No, it is merely all we have—
 Reason, and sense, and imagination,
 Then the carnivorous grave.

Live longer, Father Stevens.
 Pending improbable heavens,
 Captain our sodality
 Of Attic morality.
 Harry Lions, Elks, Moose, Eagles
 To fitting pillories;
 May your brain's brave beagles
 Bark their Auxiliaries,
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Un Poète Romantique: Gérard de Nerval

EL DESDICHADO

Je suis le ténébreux, - le veuf, - l'inconsolé,
Le prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie:
Ma seule *étoile* est morte, - et mon luth constellé
Porte le *soleil noir* de la *Mélancolie*.

Dans la nuit du tombeau, toi qui m'as consolé,
Rends-moi le Pausilippe et la mer d'Italie,
La *fleur* qui plaisait tant à mon coeur désolé,
Et la treille ou le pampre à la rose s'aillie.

Suis-je Amour ou Phébus, Lusignan ou Biron?
Mon front est rouge encor du baiser de la reine;
J'ai revé dans la grotte ou nage la sirène . . .

Et j'ai deux fois vainqueur traversé l'Achéron:
Modulant tour à tour sur la lyre d'Orphée
Les soupirs de la sainte et les cris de la fée.

C E PÔEME dont le pessimisme nostalgique reflète l'âme romantique dans son expression la plus passionnée, la plus lyrique, n'est pas l'oeuvre de Victor Hugh ni de Vigny. Lamartine n'aurait su dire son désarroi en images aussi éclectiques et Musset n'a pas pénétré dans ce monde de visions imaginaires. L'auteur en est Gérard de Nerval, appelé avec une tendresse particulière un petit-maitre du Romantisme. Il fut éun de ces jeunes hommes pâles qui, les yeux brillants, applaudirent *Hernani*. Il avait eu une enfance studieuse et douce, mais marquée par la mort de sa mère alors qu'il n'avait que 4 ans. Influencé plus tard par l'Allemagne romantique, ses légendes rhenanes, la poésie de Goethe dont il traduisit le Faust, il en a une connaissance plus directe et plus intime que ses contemporains qui la découvrent chez Madame de Staël.

Il s'éprit d'une actrice, Jenny Colon, qui le repoussa. Mais il ne pouvait accepter ce refus, et chaque soir, il la voyait, idéalisée par les feux de la rampe, et chaque soir fasciné, il revait que son amour allait enfin atteindre sa récompense. L'image de cette femme aimée le poursuivait et il l'associa à la passion qu'il éprouva pour d'autres Jenny, pour ces *Filles du Feu*, aux jolis noms anciens; Aurélia, Sylvie, Adrienne, Emilie surgies dans les clairières de Chantilly ou la lumière de la Campagne ou du Latium.

Expériences troublantes qui le désaxent, ces incarnations successives de la même "sylphide," comme l'appellerait Chateaubriand, enchevêtrant plusieurs réalités. Morte, Jenny est toujours présente, et sa disparition même apaise la douleur du remoncement à l'amour. Elle sera sa médiatrice et c'est pourquoi il lui donne parfois le nom de Marie. Sa vie eut une fin tragique en 1855, par une nuit froide d'hiver, comme on le trouva pendu à une grille dans une rue à Paris. Le mystère subsiste: acte conscient de désespoir, accès de folie, on ne sait.

Romantique, érudit, poète, ses intérêts étaient variés. D'un voyage en Proche Orient, il rapporta un pittoresque récit de voyage, sacrifiant à la vogue de l'Orientalisme de l'époque.

Son enfance se pénétra des vieilles légendes françaises du Valois: il aimait les chansons simples et fraîches du folklore, en exhumaient les paroles des rayons poussiéreux des bibliothèques où les cueillait sur les lèvres hésitante de vieillards à mémoire incertaine. Et par une lente osmose, le charme de ce vieux pays de Valois, la grace désuète des paysannes leur fraîcheur et leur esprit vif sont devenus l'essence et la qualité de son oeuvre ou se melent un léger surnaturel de légende, un peu d'ironie, beaucoup d'élégance sobre, un romantisme gracieux, élégiaque et désespéré.

C'est une illumination, une expérience mystique dont il est conscient: en même temps, le psychiatre et le dément, il s'étudie à travers le prisme grossissant du rêve et de la folie, car il perd les rennes dans ce monde inconnu et dangereux situé au-delà de la conscience claire. C'est ainsi qu'en lui-même et de lui-même, il a découvert un nouveau domaine d'investigation psychologique qu'il traduit en poésie. Libéré de la réalité objective qui lui sert de point de départ, la pensée se dissout dans le rêve, la divagation consciente, la recherche des liens secrets des émotions et des souvenirs. "Je me nourris de ma propre conscience et ne me renouvelle pas." Mais la concentration, le repliement sur soi peuvent seuls produire cette fleur malade et rare, proche du désir baudelaire de "plonger au fond de l'inconnu pour trouver du nouveau," comme dans les *Paradis Artificiels*, l'imagination délirante est un moyen de connaissance. Les Romantiques ont eu très certainement l'intuition de la psychologie expérimentale. Voici ce que Nerval écrit dans *Aurelia*: "Je crois que l'imagination humaine n'a rien inventé que ne soit vrai dans ce monde ou dans les autres, et je ne pouvais douter de ce que j'avais vu si distinctement."

Poète au luth endeuillé, Nerval n'a écrit que très peu de poèmes. Mais sa prose, menant tout droit au Grand Meaulnes, est d'une légèreté et d'une pureté telles qu'on lui donne volontiers le nom de poète.



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Mist

AFTER driving in near-silence for half the morning, we stopped—partly because the mist was just as heavy as before, and it was rather dangerous, but mostly because we knew this was as far as we needed to go. John got out and took my slicker from the back seat. We were surprised when the wind struck us; it was cold and damp, like the high grass which grew at the edge of the road and slapped wetly at my bare legs. I shivered, and John wrapped my slicker around me as we began walking across the dunes, apologetically—perhaps they were not used to being walked upon. This stretch of shore was the most desolate part of all the coast; besides, it was not the tourist season, and what visitors there were would be amusing themselves inside their cottages on a day like this. It was not weather for going on the beach. That is why John and I were there. Nothing but the strangeness of the disappearance of the sea that morning could have induced me to go out at six-thirty.

John had come into my room very early without even knocking. I suppose he knew that I would not care about protocol this time. "Janet," he whispered, "Look out the window."

I sat up. The window was wide open; the curtains and the window sill were dewy, and I imagined that John and I were a little dewy too. He pointed to the wall of mist which rose from the grey sand and obliterated the sea—"Or maybe it was never there at all," I said, and then laughed, because John did not know what I was talking about; but perhaps he did know, for he said, "Let's go look."

We left a note for our hostess. It occurred to me, as I was writing, that this was very rude, and that she would certainly disapprove of such an excursion. I folded the paper and slipped it under her door with considerable impertinence; the rudeness of the note was part of the charm of being runaways.

John drove very fast. I thought that the windshield protested against the pressure of air and mist. It was not fog—fog blows about in chunks which one can almost touch. This was wetter than fog, heavier than fog; it was everywhere and immovable, and it did not cover or conceal—it was there, that is all, and so we wondered if we had been wrong about the sea, somehow. "The sea may have been a mistake of the weather all the time," I thought, "and we have been too young to



realize it. Today the mist is more real than the sea; perhaps it always has been, and we have been too simple to notice it."

All the car windows were open as we drove. We did not turn on the radio, and we did not talk. The wet haze was inside the car as well as outside. It would have been like locking God out of church to shut the windows against the mist.

There we were, after hours of driving, and there was no sea—only grey, damp sand, and tall drenched grass, and mist. I passed my hand over my arm, and the sleeve of my slicker was as wet as if it were raining. Little drops ran out of my hair and blew horizontally across my forehead. I thought, "The wind is not coming from the land or the ocean—it is coming down the coast; but there's nothing down that way, only the end of the cape, and sea, and there isn't any sea today." The wind from nowhere frightened me, and I ran to catch up with John, who was far ahead. When I nearly fell on the slope, he stopped to wait for me. He took my hand, and we went on together. We walked for a long time. Too long, I began to think, and looked back, half expecting to turn into a pillar of salt. The car and the sand dunes had vanished. We were walking on flat beach, and I could hardly see our footsteps because the sand was so wet and hard. I stopped, and clutched John's hand so tightly that it must have startled him. "What is it, Janet?" he said, and put his arms around me.

"John," I whispered, "I'm scared."

He held me close, but he looked across my shoulder, into the mist, at something which I could not see. "Yes," he said, "I know. We should have walked into the ocean a long time ago."

"Oh John, maybe it isn't there."

He turned and looked back, as I had done. I watched his face; he frowned, and the mist seemed to be in his eyes. "Can we get back?" I said.

"I don't know." He was telling me the truth. I was glad that he did not pretend that he knew where the car was, because I knew he could not see it. He turned back to me and took both my hands, holding them so tightly that it hurt.

"Now listen, darling. Stay here for just a minute. Don't move away. I want to see how far away I can get and still see you. That way I can get some idea of the distances, and I can tell if the fog is getting worse."

I almost said, "It's not fog," but I did not. I stood still and watched him walk away. I was wet and cold, and the wind blew drops horizontally across my forehead. I tried to think logically, "If the wind is still coming down the shore, and the water is blowing across my forehead, then I must be facing the sea; so if I turn around the other way I will be facing the car and if we walk far enough we'll get there. Yes. I must be facing the sea." I suddenly remembered that there wasn't any sea.

John was nearly out of sight. He had gone quite far. I bit my lip to keep from calling him. I stuffed my hands into the pockets of my slicker, and my pockets must have been full of water because my hands got wet—or was it my feet? I looked down. I was standing in water almost ankle deep. It was foamy, and washed over my sneakers like little waves.

In little waves. It was sea waters.

"Oh," I said, and then I screamed, "John, oh John," and when I screamed it was the first noise I had heard all day. I put my hands over my ears and stood in the ocean with the mist all around me and screamed, "John, come here, John, hurry. Hurry."

MY TALK WITH GOD

I CALLED to God but
He didn't answer.
I called again and I said,
"God, be with me!"
He said,
"I'm too busy."
And so, a sinner, I blasphemed.
I said, "God doesn't give a god-damn,
God-damn Him."
Then one day someone said to me,
"Go with God."
I was shamed.
I thought, "Why should God come to me?
He's busy.
I'll just pack a few things and go to
Him."
I looked around for God
And caught a glimpse of Him in the midst of a raging sea.
I almost reached Him at Kaesong, but some
Padded yellow men were shooting at some dirty white ones,
And I got scared.
I traced Him to the Russian border but
I couldn't get in without a visa.
So I went back home.
A little while later God came to me and said
"I'm not so busy now.
What was it you wanted with me?"
I said, "God,
I just wanted to tell you you have one hell of a job.

I thought I wanted to go with you, but looking at
Some of the places you hang out, I decided
Maybe it was safer to be alone.
But if you ever have a spare moment, I'd sure appreciate
your passing by,

Like this.

And if you ever need me,

I'll be scared, but I'll come give you a hand.

In the meantime, though, I think I'll just sit right here."

God said,

"That's all right, son. You relax and have some fun,

And I won't call you unless I need you,

And I'll stop by every once in a while.

The way you can help me most is by sitting tight and keeping
out of trouble

So I won't have to worry with you.

Like you say, I got one hell of a job."

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Listen To The Trumpet

LISTEN to that trumpet blow! Man, every time I hear a horn I start going back, real far back. My feet start tingling on the ground, and I hear that train whooshing past so fast it like to blow the weevils right out of the cotton. She was the old Cannon Ball express on the L. and N. line, and she rolled right from Cincinnati to New Orleans. I mean to tell! She was a roarer; nothing slowed her down, not even those sticky days of the '30's, when the Market crash had everybody's horn in hock. That's where mine was. Old Depression got me, too. I was lost, man, lost! I got to wanting to blow so bad my fingers kept reaching for stops on an invisible trumpet, and I had to keep my hands in my pockets.

I got to feeling so low I quit going to the jam sessions. We used to hold them in the switching shack at the south end of the rail-yard. It was a far piece from the shanty town, but I always walked slow so's I could listen a little to the trains rumbling in the darkness. I liked the whistles, even if they did give me a lonely, gone, feeling. That shack wasn't nothing so hot, neither. It was just ordinary, small and square, and set up on stilts so the spring rain wouldn't seep through the floor boards. The shingles didn't even stick out far enough to have a porch, and the framework was so rotten that when the horns got to blowing up to Gabriel and the drums started digging the other way, the whole shebang would shimmy and tremble 'til we left hold for awhile. Once I thought sure it was going all the way.

I was standing up against the stove, keeping warm and seeing good. The jug was passing mighty quickly from hand to hand, and I guess there wasn't anybody there who wasn't feeling happy. We had the place done up real pretty, with popcorn on strings making yellow swirls against red apples. We even had a store-bought bell with a sparkly clapper we were going to ring to see the New Year in. The snow was falling gentle like outside, but it could of been hail and we'd never of heard it. We'd started out with hymns and carols, "Silent Night, and "Little Town of Bethlehem." We'd covered the bare light bulbs with red paper to give it a kind of holiday glow, and for a while it was soft and pretty and calm.

Then it just seemed as if Rainy couldn't keep his tongue still, and soon his clarinet was noodling and sliding up and down. Billy David's horn began to wail. Blue's ole bass began to crawl, and those Wise Men's camels started walking all around. My feet just wouldn't keep still. One-three beats came stamping out clearer and stronger all over the floor, and the hand-clap caught up on the triplet and doubled softly on the two-and-four. I didn't know the black boy at the piano, but those keys were sure elastic. He kept running up and down the ladder with no place to go; and when Butter Boy picked up his see see rider you could rear rein-deers trotting on the tin roof. How that nigger could play the guitar! Why he went so fast the icicles hanging by their toes from the rafter started to melt and drip down on the drum. Samuel's sticks were just a blur so you didn't think he held

nothing in his hands, but, man that roll was real. I mean to tell! It was a six wheel chaser, and Chicken Biddy was right up there on top the coal, shouting and a-yelling, "Lawd, Lawd! This am a Christmas Jesus Train!" Her red dress shimmered around her hips, and her black hands flapped like crows. The alto sax was a-howling like a banshee and its notes were all gone blue. The wa-wa done jumped right inside me and started throttling my backbone with its icy hands. I was up against that stove, but I was cold.

For a time they were really rolling down that track, letting off steam, and throwing all the switches wide open. It was too hot to last. Blue was the first to quit, and his walking bass came creeping to a stop. Then Rainy quit, and the black boy at the piano, and all of them just stopped. The alto sax held on for a while and then kind of died away, but you never can wash a blue note out of the air. Little Billy David made a grab for the jug, but Chicken Biddy got there before him. Then ever'body was swigging, the bottle standing on its head most of the time. They didn't rest long, just 'til Samuel kicked up the beat for them again. I guess they must of played that way for hours, with the music gathering sound like a snowball, and melting, and growing, and throbbing through that little shack until everything was vibrating and pulsing with it. They did all the Christmas songs that way, and it sounded real fine.

It was getting close to midnight and the horns were feeling dry when they took their first real break. Blue laid his 'viol over in the corner, and Samuel pushed his drums out of the way. Oh, my, what a time we all had then! We were joking, and teasing, and making fun, and shouting until you couldn't of heard nothing but laughter. Fat ole Chicken Biddy started cackling so hard Billy David started looking for the egg. Samuel vowed he was going to kiss every woman there before the New Year, and he set out to do it too, with his skinny arms chasing the gals into corners and his big lips flapping like a Ubangi.

It started getting real warm, and the sweat got to rolling down our faces. We opened the door a-touch to let that cold air in, and there was Colley, huddling on the doorstep, a-freezing and a-shivering. Colley was as crazy as a jay bird. Why, he couldn't talk, couldn't say nothing at all! I guess he got pushed around more than he oughta, but there wasn't anybody real mean to him; and anyway he kept coming around, and coming around. He was always tagging after somebody, foller'n them all over the station, and the yard, and even foller'n the work gangs up the tracks. Nobody bothered with him much 'til he started coming to the jamborees. Then he got to fingering the boys' horns and fiddling with the drums. Blue got

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right angry; he said he didn't want no crazy black boy putting a hoodoo on his bass. After that Blue'd start muttering to himself ever'time he saw Colley coming. None of the other boys'd let him touch their horns, neither; but as long as I had mine I didn't really mind much. The way that boy's eyes would roll when I let him hold my trumpet I couldn't never refuse him. Funny thing, he'd borrow it from me ever'time I let him, but he never tried to blow it where anyone could hear him. He made the fellows uncomfortable, though, and they got to shutting the door on him. Pretty soon he stopped coming inside even if the door was open. He'd just set out there on the doorstep from kin to kant, rain or shine, listening. That night it was so cold we wouldn't of shut a dog out. He hunched up beside the stove next to me, shivering so hard I could hear his bones rattle. You could almost see them, too, the way he had almost nothing on a-tall, just a raggedy coat pulled over his bare chest, and baling twine holding up his pants and tying his shoes together.

Like I said, there weren't none of us real mean, but that jug was pure snake-belly spit, and ever'body's tongue was a little too loose and easy. Biddy got to calling him "Mr. Scare-a-crow," and curtsying to him real polite. They made a kind of game of it, talking to him like he was the King of Babylon riding on the gravy train.

"Why, man, where you been, King?" Blue's eyes popped like peeled eggs and he grasped a string of corn and started twisting the ends together. "King, we got you a goldy crown!"

"Oh, Lawdy," Samuel chuckled, "Don't he look fine!"

"Give him a golden scepter and a golden robe, man," Butter Boy put the brass spittoon in Colley's hands and threw a whole batch of pop-corn strings over his shoulders. I thought Chicken Biddy liked to split her sides laughing when they lifted Colley up on the piano stool for a throne, and heaped apples about his feet for jewels, and gave him a golden girdle of broom straws.

"Whew-ee! Look at that black boy, King-of-straws!" The fat just shook all over her, and her big mouth looked like a mule's braying, yellow teeth slipping from under thick lips. "Hey there, boy, you want to be my brown?" We liked to turn inside out laughing at that one. "You'd have to plump on *my* lap, boy, 'cause I'd sure pancake you if'in I sat down on yours! Whoo-ee! Look at me, King. I bowing down to You!"

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"Oh, King, be good to your chillun," Rainy fell on his knees, hooting and making like Colley was a gawd.

I thought it was pretty funny myself, 'til I took a good look at Colley's face. He weren't laughing, and there was something hurting in his eyes. Then I felt mean, real low down mean, like I wanted to kill somebody; but I just stood there, letting the pisen run through me, watching those fool niggers make a mockery of a man. They told him how he had a million bucks and cadalics made out of gold; how he ate caviar, and dressed in furs and diamonds and wore silver shoes on his feet. Colley didn't have a dime; he hadn't rode in a car in his life. Caviar; Man, he ate once a day and it was black beans all the way to the bottom of the can. They told him how he had a kingdom full of servants, and how Blue was his Prime Minister and Samuel his Earl-of-straw. Butter Boy said he was the Treasurer of all his jewels, and Rainy was his President of State. Colley'd never got a thing from them niggers, not even the borrow of a horn. He tried to get down, but they wouldn't let him; not them, they were having too much fun. They got to joking 'bout how he didn't seem to believe them; and they swore it was all the gospel; that they'd prove it to him.

"Jest you ask for anything, King. You ask for it and we gits it for you!" They winked at each other. "Guess that'll prove how much a King you is." They knowed he couldn't say a word. His tongue didn't have no bones. He fooled them though, and quick as a hoppy toad he pointed to the trumpet. Billy David scowled real mean, "You can't have my horn, black boy."

"Give him the horn," I said. "Give him the horn."

They gave him the horn, and he took it in his big hands like it was a baby. I seen that twisted look go out of his face and get all smoothed and calm. He stood there on that piano stool among the apples with the pop-corn strung all over him, and suddenly he was a *King!* You don't got to believe me, but I was there, and I seen him. I seen him put that trumpet to his lips, and Lawd, I heard him play! He blew that first note high and sweet and soft, so full of longing that it was like a naked wind sighing in the streets, or a lonely man crying in an empty room. He closed his eyes, and he rocked back on his heels, and he tore that wail from somewhere down inside him so deep I felt as if somebody had torn my soul right out of my body. All the days and nights and lonely weeks I had ever known came rushing back to me. I saw long bread lines of hungry men, and I heard drunken snores in gutters, prostitutes' laughter in barrel-houses, train whistles calling through the

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night. That nigger-haunting train was roaring through the room and all the haunts were riding, riding, with it. I seen dirty slums and shanty towns; poor folks working on the tramp-beats, and by the railroad tracks; black men slaving in the cotton, dying like weeds on the river banks, Mississippi, Congo. I heard black slaves wailing in chains, and free ones dancing to an African chant. My blood ran like molassas, and their voodoo goffer dust fell on me like rain. Oh, Lawd, those blues were walking heavy on my grave. I saw them walking plain as plain. They were dragging a big black buck in iron chains, who raised his shackled arms, and shouted, "Lawd, Lawd," but the trumpet cracked like a blacksnake whip and he sank down into the mud while another rose in his place, and another, and another. They plodded in a long black line across the room, chanting, dancing to the measured beat of an African drum.

Then every one of them got taller, and the chains fell away and the trumpet pealed and sang, "Glory, glory! Hallelujah, Lawd!" They went faster and faster, swarming through the air like all the lost hopes of forgotten dreams, every one of them with a shining trumpet. Up and higher the music swelled and rang; until it cracked and split shattering the haunts and leaving only Colley standing there swaying in the half light, dumb and still, with the echo of his soul still ringing in the air. I knowed nobody'd ever blow that horn again.

Like dead men, we stood and watched him lay the trumpet down careful on the piano top. I didn't see him go, but I heard the express come whistling up the grade, with all the trains and bells echoing her. The factory siren was blasting through the night, and through the open door I saw that people were standing out in the snow without their hats on, and cheering. Then I knew it was the new year.

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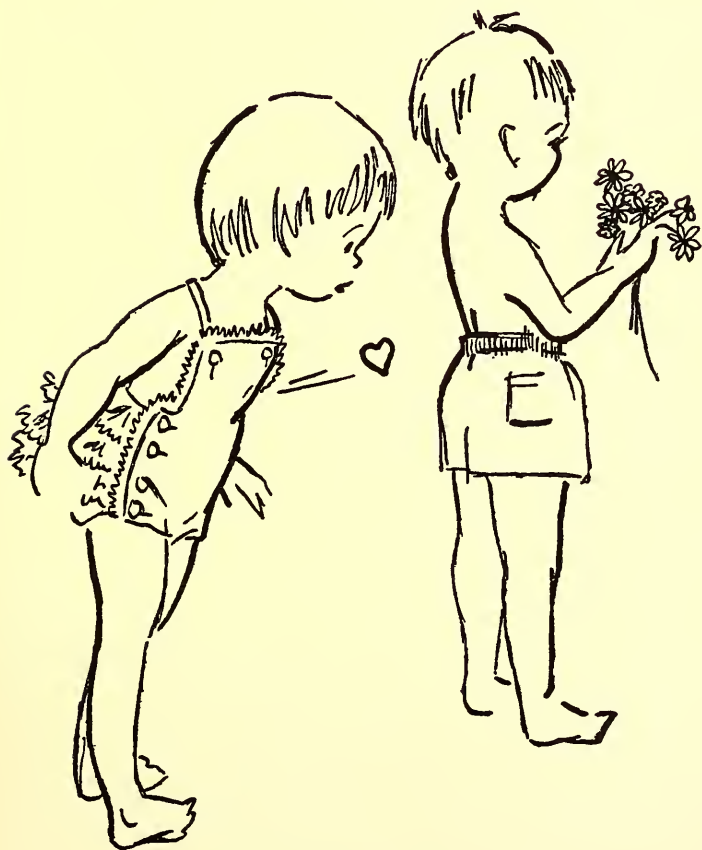
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Thanksgiving

NEVER
Has life been so more
Sky's perfection aching
 above fall shorn trees;
Cold—so much that senses are cut
Antiseptically.
Love so full of two years
Now drawn and quartered
On my floor.

Sit, sudden Hopelessness
In this beribboned home.
There is the gaudy mask, simplicity,
On a hopechest;
Dust cloths over all; concealing
The rest.
Sit down, my love, and study your crowded house
With stranger's eyes.

Welcome the glimmer;
The being hit over the head with
God's tutorial club:
 that in this total house
 I have yet an empty room
 Which
 Entering—I bring along
 the naked furniture
 I have made.
Love—I've grown;
Afraid.

The Children's Gargoyle

"JAMESY, wake up!" The little girl pulled at her brother's shoulder anxiously. "Oh, Jamesy, do wake up!" A shutter near the gabled window of the nursery gave a sudden creak, and she snatched a fold of her cotton nightdress in her hands and jumped into the big bed beside her brother.

"Ouch," quite loudly. "I say, Elspeth, whatever are you doing in MY bed?" Jamesy hissed quite indignantly, "And do keep your elbows to yourself."

"Oh, Jamesy, a dreadful thing's happened!" Elspeth's wide eyes and quivery lips caused Jamesy to sit up anxiously. "Gargle's gone!"

"Gargle?" wide mouthed amazement. "I don't believe you." Jamesy flung back the comforter and scrambled to the window; from which, in his surprise, he nearly tumbled out. "Elspeth, Elspeth, he is gone!"

"I told you." Elspeth flew to the window beside her brother, the hem of her white gown tangling in her flying bare feet.

Together the two children leaned over the window sill. The night was clear, and the roof top and gables of the old house rose directly below them. The nursery was in a far turret of the east wing, and so resembled a castle that the children had long ago appropriated it for their own. It was an ornate old house, festooned with garlands of iron work, and scrolls, and cornices that shimmered in the moon's light. Around the topmost portion of the main house, immediately below the turret window, there was a wide ledge, directly in the middle of which was a large square stone block. The two children stared at the stone in silence. Then Jamesy whispered, "It is true then. Nana was right: gargoyles can fly. Today must be Gargle's hundredth year. She said they come alive every hundred years from ten o'clock until twelve."

"The witching hours, she said," echoed Elspeth.

"Yes," Jamesy continued, stuttering in his wonderment, "and at twelve o'clock they turn to stone again wherever they are."

"I wonder what time it is now?" Elspeth questioned.

As if in answer, they heard the soft boom of the tower clock. Breathlessly they whispered the hour, "Three quarters past."

"Oh, Jamesy, it's so long to wait until twelve," Elspeth murmured.

"You are a goose, Elspeth," Jamesy spoke with brotherly scorn. "Don't you remember Father told us that the coal strike was to end at twelve tonight? And that since Standard time changes tonight, the Lord Mayor has decreed that it will change an hour before midnight so as to end the strike sooner. That means it will be twelve in only fifteen minutes, and eleven won't even ring tonight."

Elspeth gave a little cry, "But, Jamesy, Gargle doesn't know that!" Tears filled her eyes. "He'll still be flying about when it strikes twelve, and-and he'll turn back t-to stone before he knows it!" The last words were a wail.

Jamesy was horrified. "Oh, Gargle," he whispered softly as he tried to check

a sob. It wasn't manly to cry. His father never did. Jamesy stood very still. "Elspeth?" he said. A sob was his only reply. "We've got to help Gargle, Elspeth." Jamesy's little-boy chin lifted resolutely. "We'll have to find him and tell him before twelve." He shook Elspeth. "Don't cry, Ducky. That won't help." Then more kindly, (after all she was only a girl), "Come on, Elspeth. If we hurry, we might not be too late." Jamesy grasped the lattice and swung one leg over the sill. With a soft plop of bare feet, he landed on the ledge and looked back at his sister. "Well, come on."

"Oh, Jamesy, we shouldn't!" There was a horrified look on Elspeth's face.

"Coo lummy, Elspeth, we must." Jamesy hardened his heart and urged, "You don't want Gargle to turn to stone and fall down on the street and smash all to pieces, do you?" He added quickly, for the thought was almost too much even for him, "Of course, he won't. That is, if we find him in time." Then all pretense aside "Oh, Elspeth, hurry, hurry. It's easy. Come on. Just jump; I'll catch you." And Jamesy steadied his sister as she bravely shut her eyes and jumped from the window. "Come on," he repeated, and hand in hand they ran past the empty stone.

Keeping well away from the more suspicious shadows and staying to the safe patches of moonlight as much as they could, the two children made their way past broken shingles and last autumn's gutter leaves. Their pace slowed the further they went from the nursery window. A startled starling fluttered from the eaves, and Elspeth clutched Jamesy in terror.

"Do you see him?" Jamesy whispered.

"Nooo, and I'm scared," Elspeth moaned.

"Silly goose." Jamesy chided, as he put a protecting arm about her, secretly to give courage to himself.

Together they turned a corner of the ledge, and a huge chimney loomed in front of them. A chimney pot creaked in the slight breeze that tugged at the children's long nightskirts and twitched them about the ankles. The children were gingerly inching their way past the chimney base, when a strange thin shape rose from the chimney's depth and came clattering toward them. "Oh!" Elspeth screamed and flung herself headlong at Jamesy. Panicked, the two children tumbled back onto the ledge, and bewildered with fear, they backed against the eaves.

"Go way," Jamesy stammered tremulously, his small fists warding off the apparition. "Go way," his voice sounded high and thin.

"Ere, now, wot's this?" came a gruff ejaculation. "Coo blimy, 'tis a couple of infants!" and the black shape flung up its hands in surprise.

"Oh, Elspeth," Jamesy sighed with relief, "it's only the Sweep!"

"Only, only?" The Sweep's moustache bristled indignantly. "Oo says only, I loike t'knauw?"

Jamesy quickly tried to appease him. "We thought you were a frightful monster. I mean, well, you are blimy black," he ended lamely.

The Sweep smiled, and his teeth gleamed in his dark face. "Well, I jolly well 'ope so. 'Tis the chimbley, ye knauw." And he put a finger beside his nose in a most mysterious manner. "Soot," he whispered putting his head close to theirs. "Soot, soot, lovely soot," and he twirled about in a funny sort of jig, his scarecrow legs flapping grotesquely. The children were fascinated. "And sparks," he chortled happily. "Red ones, and yellow ones, and orange ones. Whee!" and the soot flew from him in a shower of black. Then he said, collapsing his tall frame beside the

children and nodding to Jamesy, "Ere, old chap, wot er you two hinfants doing about the roof at a time of nite loike 'tis?"

"We were looking for our gargoyle," Jamesy explained with renewed urgency. "It's his hundredth year, you see; but he doesn't know that twelve won't chime to-night, and . . ."

"Ere now," the Sweep interrupted, "you're talking in riddles. Wot's this 'ere gargoyle?"

Elspeth peeked out from behind Jamesy. "He's sort of a beastie, you might say."

"That's right," Jamesy added, "He's got funny wings sort of like a bat, and he's a lion in front and a goat behind. But he's very handsome, and gentle as our dog."

The Sweep looked first at Jamesy and then to Elspeth. "You wouldn't joke to a poor old Sweep, now would you?" he whispered.

"Oh, no, sir," Elspeth said seriously. "He's made of stone, and he sits outside our window on the ledge."

"But tonight's his hundredth year," Jamesy put in, "and he can fly from ten o'clock until twelve, but at twelve he will turn to stone again."

The Sweep gave a little hop and whirled on one leg to return to his same position, "Only, because of the strike, he'll be caught off guard win the tower clock strikes twelve instead of eleven, eh?" and he chuckled. "I'm not so dumb, I'm not." And he put his finger up to his nose again. "The swallows say I'm daft with soot. My brains er all smoked out, they say." He leaned closer. "But I'll help you get him back, I will." He shook his head sadly. "Poor bloike, poor bloike." A

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sooty tear trickled from his eye. "Turned to stone, turned to stone," and he put his head in his hands and started to cry mournfully.

"Don't cry, Sweep, don't cry." Jamesy tugged at his elbow. "Please, Sweep, help us."

"Coo, wait till I pull meself together, boy." And he blew his coal black nose on a coal black handkerchief with a trumpet blast. "Poor bloike. Turned to stone," and he wiped his eyes.

"There he is, there he is!" Elspeth shouted suddenly, jumping up on a large block. "Gargle, Gargle," and she waived the skirt of her nightdress.

"Where, where?" Jamesy yelled turning violently around and twisting his neck in all directions. "Where, where? I can't see him."

"On the church, on the church, Gargle, Gargle, Gargle!" Elspeth could hardly contain herself.

"Gawd lummy!" The Sweep ran to the parapart and leaned over as far as he could, his eyes popping.

Across the square, the church spire rose gracefully above the park. Its iron bells hung silently in shadow. Across the face of the clock a strange form flitted, grotesque and awkward. It lit on the railing of the bell alcove, and the three on the roof top heard its weird cry echo and reverberate in the stone chamber.

"Gargle," Jamesy breathed. Then, "Quick, shout all together, maybe he can hear us." They put their heads together and yelled on the Sweep's count of three, "Gargle, Gargle." No response, not even a glance in their direction. "Again," Jamesy said worriedly. "Garrrrgle!"

"Oh, Jamesy, he's too far away!" Elspeth started to cry.

"Ere, maybe this will fetch'im." Sweep popped back of the chimney and brought forth a broken brush without a handle. "Just let me get me sights 'ere," he mumbled. "Aaha," and he began an elaborate windup, one foot raised on the wall. Round and round his arm whirled, faster and faster until he was nearly smothered in a rain of soot. "There!" He let go, and the brush went flying, turning over and over, first the back and then the bristles. The children watched it grow smaller and smaller as it skimmed out over the square. It almost hit a chimney; but just as they thought it would miss the church altogether, it gave a little curve and sailed right through the arch and landed directly in front of the gargoyle.

"Hurrah," yelled Jamesy. Then as the gargoyle turned its head, they all began jumping up and down and flapping their arms. "Over here, Gargle. Over here," Jamesy cupped his hands and yelled.

"He's coming, he's really coming," Elspeth shouted in glee.

Then with a swoosh and a scraping of claws the gargoyle executed a Leibsig turn and landed perfectly on the chimney pot.

"Bravo!" shouted Jamesy as he rushed forward.

"Gargle," chortled Elspeth.

"Help," roared the gargoyle as he was literally tackled by the happy children. "Wait, wait. Don't smother me!" his growly voice was deep and gravelly.

"Oh, Gargle, we're so glad to see you!"

"Now, children, your manners." The gargoyle raised one talon. You haven't introduced us," he growled reprovingly with a nod toward the Sweep.

"Oim only a Sweep," the Sweep said bashfully. "Oi cleans the chimbleys, and brush the soot away. Ye knauw."

"Not only," Jamesy defended. "You said yourself it wasn't only."

"That's right, so I did," the Sweep replied cheerfully. "Well, pleased to meet you anyway."

"Charmed, I'm sure." The gargoyle bowed politely.

Suddenly they all stiffened. Jamesy's heart sank to the pit of his stomach, as he heard the boom of the tower clock.

"One," said the bells.

"Gargle," he cried. "It's twelve."

"Yes, eleven doesn't strike tonight," sobbed Elspeth.

"But it must," growled the gargoyle uncomprehending.

"Day loite comes in tonight, but the Lord Mayor moved it up an hour to end the coal strike," explained the Sweep hurriedly. "Look."

Together they stared as the slim hands of the clock passed eleven, and gaining speed, finally showed twelve o'clock. "Three," boomed the bells.

"I must get back," the gargoyle roared frightenedly. Desperately he flapped his wings but could not get off the floor.

"Four!"

"Run, Gargle, run," Jamesy shrieked.

"Five!"

"Run," the Sweep grabbed the children and set off with them as the gargoyle galloped along the ledge.

"Six!"

"I can't, I can't. I'm turning to stone," moaned the gargoyle. Slower and slower he moved. "Help me, children, help me."

"Eight!"

Jamesy and Elspeth grabbed his wings and tried to pull. "'Ere, I'm pushing," gasped the Sweep. "'Urry, 'urry!"

"Nine!"

"There's your stone. You'll make it, dear gargoyle. Hurry," cried Elspeth.

"Ten!"

"Just a little more, dear Gargle, just a little more." But the gargoyle's paws could barely move. He was growing cold, his joints creaked.

"Eleven!"

"On, dear gargoyle, on!" Jamesy was frantic. The stone was still a few feet away.

"We'll never make it!" wept wee Elspeth as she tried to reach his tail. Then the Sweep gave a mighty shove, and the stone was reached.

"Twelve!"

"We made it, dear gargoyle! You're safe!" and the children flung themselves on his neck. But alas, their kisses met with no response, for their gargoyle's eyes were glazed and his limbs stiff. He had turned to stone.

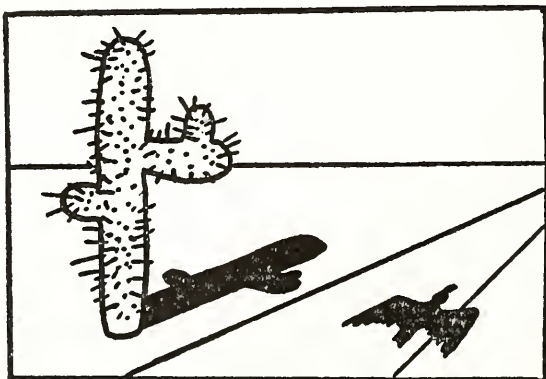
"Oh, Gargle," Elspeth burst into tears.

"'Ere, now. Don't cry," the Sweep put his arms about the children. "'E's 'appy, 'e is." He drew out his coal black handkerchief. "Now blow." Snuggling them in his arms he said softly, "'E's where 'e wants to be, ain't 'e? 'E can sleep now for another hundred years, 'e can. Just loike 'e always was.

No, not just like he always was. For as the Sweep lifted him in through the nursery window, Jamesy saw that the tip of the gargoyle's tail stuck over the edge of the stone ever so slightly.

AUGUST SKY

AUGUST sky—
hard, silent blue
pressing hot upon the earth;
breathing, sucking life
from living things;
bearing,
pressing down,
pinning shadows against the road.
Magnificent,
you rule.



CELIA

CELIA turned on the cold water and dashed some on her face with her hands. She made no effort to look at her face in the bathroom mirror above the washbasin. It had been years since she'd done more than glance in a mirror.

She hesitated a moment, then reached down into the clothes hamper under the washbasin and brought up a bottle of gin, and poured herself a third of a water tumbler. Hearing footsteps in the hall, she tipped the glass and drank the gin quickly, then walked with careful gravity back to the bedroom and got into bed, straightening the covers and propping herself up with pillows to receive her visitor.

Eleven in the morning was too early to have company in Celia's estimation. She didn't feel much like seeing anyone, but she supposed she ought to let Emily come. It gave her a warm feeling to have people calling and coming to see her again. It was like old times when she and Bart had done a lot of entertaining and had been invited everywhere.

When Emily came in, she greeted her warmly. "So glad you came, Emily. Do sit over there in the big chair."

Emily sat down. There was an uncomfortable silence.

Emily hesitated, looked at Celia and asked, "How's Sally? I was wondering about her. We don't see her much anymore."

Celia felt herself stiffening. "Sally's all right, I guess. Never here. All she does these days is drive to school, drive to the drug store, drive to a basketball game. Drive, Drive, Drive!" Celia's voice got higher and higher, but she couldn't seem to do anything about it.

"Poor child," said Emily. "How she must miss her father. They were almost inseparable, weren't they?"

"Sally tagged along after Bart everywhere, even to the hospital, if that's what you mean. I think she knew his patients better than he did," Celia said sarcastically.

"I can still see the proud expression on his face whenever she rode in the horse shows. By the way, is she doing much riding now?"

"I should say not! I sold her horse," said Celia.

Emily's face held a look of incredulity. "You sold her horse?" she asked, not believing the words she had just heard.

"When Bart died, I told Sally we'd have to cut down on everything, and that we certainly weren't going to pay forty dollars a month to board a horse, and that was that," Celia retorted.

"But-but, Celia," Emily protested, you and Sally don't have to worry about money. John says that Bart left you all that you'd need for the rest of your life."

"That's fine for you to say when you still have John to take care of you. I've got to take care of what poor Bart left," Celia said, the tears beginning to stream down her cheeks. Her head sunk back in the pillow. "My heart is broken," she moaned. "There's nothing to live for."

"Of course Bart's sudden death was a shock, Celia. You wouldn't be human if you weren't grief-stricken, but how can you say that you've nothing to live for when you have Sally?"

Celia raised her distorted, tear stained face, wiped the tears away and glared at Emily.

"If Bart, Jr. had lived things would have been different," Celia moaned. "I wouldn't have been left alone."

Emily Landrum sat up straight in her chair. "Celia," she said, "I want you to listen to me. Someone has to tell you the truth. You've got to get hold of yourself or you're going to land in an institution, maybe forever."

Celia stared at the wall. "You wouldn't dare talk to me that way if Bart were alive."

"No, I wouldn't," Emily agreed. "Bart took care of your drinking as long as he lived, but how he coped with it as well as he did all these years is still a mystery to all of us."

"Get out of my house. Please get out of my house," Celia said in a muffled, incoherent voice.

"I'll get out," Emily said calmly, "when I've said what I came to say. You can't intimidate me the way you do Sally and Mattie."

Celia wondered what she meant by intimidating Mattie. She had given her maid the run of the house. Mattie could do anything she wanted as long as Celia wasn't bothered.

Celia began to weep again. "Just because I take a few drinks now and then to make me forget, you're all trying to make a drunkard out of me."

"Nobody is making anything out of you," Emily said. "It's what you're doing to yourself and to Sally."

"Always Sally, Sally, Sally," Celia said sarcastically.

Emily looked at her, but said nothing.

"Sally's always been well cared for," Celia sulked. "Why that child has had everything since we adopted her—dogs, horses, cars . . ."

"But not what she needs most," Emily interrupted, "especially right now when she has lost her father, and that's love and understanding." She looked at Celia seriously. "She also needs some supervision. How can you let a sixteen-year-old run around with none at all?"

"Oh, she'll get along," said Celia. "If you're all so worried about her, I'll speak to her guardian about sending her off to school."

The gin was beginning to make Celia drowsy. She settled herself back on the pillows. She didn't know when Emily left nor did she care. Through blurred senses she thought of Emily's accusations, and laughed to herself. It gave her a sense of satisfaction to know that all of Bart's friends and hers were concerned about her. She could picture them telephoning each other, "What about Celia?" Let them worry about Sally. She had thought long ago that Sally could fill the ache in her heart for little Bart. She'd been good to Sally, though she had to admit that in the last few years they'd grown farther and farther apart. Sally never said anything, but she knew that Sally was disapproving of her taking a drink, though she thought she was careful never to let Sally see her.

"Do you think the child is blind, Celia?" Bart had asked her once. "You've got to stop this infernal nipping. We'll have a grown daughter on our hands soon."

Later he had threatened her with cure somewhere in an institution. "How can you be so heartless, Celia? Sally is so ashamed that she's stopped bringing her friends home. But I guess you haven't even noticed that!" He had slammed the door and gone off to the hospital or somewhere.

After that, Celia tried to cut down on the amount she drank, and things went along more smoothly. But Sally and Bart were always leaving her at home. They did so many things that she didn't like to do, like riding and canoeing. When she thought of Bart's goodness to her through the years, she couldn't complain, but things were different before Sally grew up and took so much of his time.

It was later that afternoon that the minister came. Celia wouldn't have seen him, but Mattie brought him upstairs before she could protest.

"I'm sorry to find you in bed, Mrs. Mann," he said. Such pretty spring weather you're missing."

Celia was glum. Let him prattle on, she thought.

"Sally's stopped coming to Sunday School," he went on, "and she was one of our regulars in the teen-age group. A fine little girl."

When Celia said nothing, he changed the subject of Sally. "I know what a shock and a loss you've suffered, Mrs. Mann," he said, "and as your pastor I would like to help you." Celia wondered why he considered himself her pastor when she never went to church. Bart hadn't been a churchgoer either, though he did give money, she remembered. Sally was the one who had gone everytime she had a chance.

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"It won't be easy for you," the minister was saying, "but if you could start going to church I believe that it would help you. Why don't you let me have you picked up next Sunday in time for the morning service?"

"Sure, sure," Celia said. Anything to get rid of him, she thought.

"Why that's the spirit. Meanwhile, I hope to see you out in this wonderful sunshine before then," he said, rising from his chair to Celia's relief. He came to the bed, took her hand, and to her astonishment, bowed his head, and said, "May God help you."

He was hardly out of the front door when she called, "Mattie, Mattie!"

When Mattie appeared, Celia gave her a withering look and said, "You knew better than to bring that sanctimonious preacher up here. Thought you'd save my soul, didn't you? Instead, you've lost your job! Now, take this and get out of my sight." Celia handed the shaken colored woman twenty dollars, which the woman put in her pocket and started toward the door, then turned and came back.

"But how's Miss Sally goin' ter git along without me?"

Celia's voice became a scream. "That's for Miss Sally to worry about. Now get going, and fast."

When Mattie had gone, Celia jumped out of bed, hurried downstairs, and locked the door. Now she would have the whole house to herself again. Sally wouldn't be back for hours, and she could let herself in with a key.

She returned upstairs and made straight for the bathroom and the bottle of gin, which was almost empty. Drinking quickly what remained, she went to the telephone and dialed a number. "Mr. Swinson?" she inquired.

"Yes, ma'am," a voice replied.

"Two bottles of Dixie Belle Gin. This is Mrs. Mann."

The voice was brisk, but respectful. 'Be right over, ma'am.'

Celia went back downstairs. Waiting for the gin, she wandered around the house restlessly. It was six o'clock. Maybe she should eat something, but the thought of food was nauseating. She would smoke a cigarette. When she'd had so much throat trouble last year, she'd had to give up smoking, and she was just getting back into the habit. The cigarette tasted good.

The door chimes sounded. Celia peeked out of the front window to be sure that was the gin and not a visitor. Then she looked for an ash tray, found one on the arm of the sofa, and went to answer the door. The transaction was brief.

"Evening, ma'am," the man said, "Seven dollars in all."

Celia already had the exact amount, which she handed to him. She closed the door, locked it again, and hurried back upstairs.

She poured herself a good drink of gin, put the two bottles down into the clothes hamper, closed it, and went back to bed.

Almost happily she took in the furnishings of the room, the pictures. Here were the mahogany furniture and the twin beds she and Bart had bought when they were first married. "Our extravagance," they had called this purchase, but it had been worth it. She could close her eyes and see Bart in his striped pajamas, climbing into the bed opposite her. She could almost feel his hand reaching out in the darkness when she waked at night and called to him. She never grew tired of looking at the pictures—the one of Bart as a young doctor, the one of little Bart at eight, just before he was stricken with the fatal polio, and herself as a young girl.

Yes, she loved this room and everything it had in it. It was her stronghold, shutting out all that was real and ugly and hateful to her.

The telephone rang. She wouldn't answer it. As a gesture of defiance at the continued interruption, she got out of bed, went into the bathroom, and closed the door. Again, she took the gin bottle out of the clothes hamper and poured herself a drink, this time half-a-glassful. She brought the glass back into the bedroom, got into bed, placed the pillows at her back, and slowly began drinking the gin, letting it warm her through and through. Affectionately she gazed at the pictures on the wall as she continued to sip until her glass was empty, placing it on the table beside the 'phone. She slowly sank into a blissful unconsciousness.

The 'phone rang. It rang again, jarring the quietness of the room. From force of habit she reached for the 'phone. Then she remembered that Sally was going to call about something or other. She couldn't remember what. "Good enough for her," she thought. "Let her worry about why I don't answer the phone. Celia doesn't want to talk to anyone now," she said as she settled herself under the covers, drawing them over her head and ears to stifle the sound of the clanging 'phone.

Eventually there was silence in the room, broken only by Celia's soft breathing as she lay in the mahogany twin bed, sinking deeper and deeper into unconsciousness and a world of her own fabrication. The pungent smell of smoke brought a smile to her face as she dreamed of a campfire long ago and a little boy playing at being a cowboy.

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Ad Unam, Ad Usam

TO the last one, according to the custom.
(This, fond mouthings of glory taught by my father and his,
Taught by his father and his—
And on through the patchwork patterns,
Screaming blood-lust and terror,
Through the nights of passion)

"My sins lie scarlet in the night!"

To the last one, according to the custom.
(This, fond mouthings of glory taught by my father to his,
And on through the subtle tracings,
Murmured Aves and shadows,
Through the nights of weeping)

"I have sent my son to die!"

The putrid odors and bloody stench
Of Tradition
Are Death, and Glory.

(Forewarned Caesar bleeding pleas to Brutus;
Shining silver and hot blood, sacrifice to the Sepulchre;
Carton guillotined for Bloody June Days,
And the freedom of a peasant to choose Louis-Napoleon;)

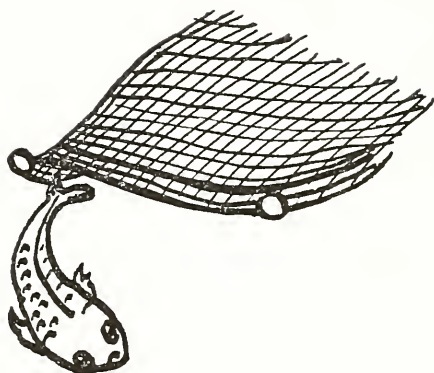
"How should I not vote for this gentleman, I whose nose was
frozen at Moscow?"

The putrid odors and bloody stench
Of Tradition
Are Death, and Glory.

(The white scrouge, triumphant in the valleys of the Mohawk,
the Columbia, the Rio Grande, murders red and brown;
The Shenandoah steams with blood of blue and gray;
The country of emigrants emigrates, dealing death to black-shirts,
mass-murder in the name of the Brotherhood of Man;)
"Remember the Alamo, or Anzio, or Sherman's March to the Sea!"

Break the fetid fetish,
This death-wish, this taste of blood.
The right to live has a cool savor,
The right to die, decay.
Break the fetid fetish.
Death is silent and safe and peaceful:
Dare to live and be brave!

This, fond mouthing of glory is taught by me to mine,
For as long as a voice can be prolonged,
This, fond mouthing of glory is taught by me to mine,
And let them die for it,
To the last one!
According to the custom.



The Insatiate Fisherman

LIKE babbling silver fish
My words rush out
To splash upon the page In mad confusion,
Circling about.

Daily I cast my nets
With fresh hooks baited
To catch my silver fish,
Only to find them—
Silver plated.

I can not write as poets write,
Nor catch what they can reach,
Yet no one cares
For silver scales
Who hungers for the meat.

JUST LIKE THE OTHERS

THE TRAIN pulled away, going South. Mary Clark Gibson wished, wildly, that she were on it, no matter where it took her. I wouldn't care, she thought—at least I wouldn't have to be here, making a fool of myself. She shaded her eyes and looked toward the station; the platform was a milling mass of girls and their dates—their dates who, she thought bitterly, were decent enough to come and pick them up. I must be the only girl who was on that whole train who wasn't met.

She was too proud to look desperately around. She sat down on her suitcase, and as the crowd pushed past her, she watched them; but in all the hundreds, there was not one that she knew. Her friends, who had come with her on the train, had thrown their arms around their dates and gone away, promptly forgetting Mary Clark, who had obtained promises from all of them to take her along to the house if Bruce wasn't there to meet her.

She drew herself up and tried to communicate a feeling of I-don't-care to the people going by, who didn't care either. Every crew-cut head above every tweed coat looked exactly alike to her, until, as the crowd thinned out, she suddenly saw Bob Benton's happily familiar red hair.

"Hi, M.C.," he said. "You're looking mighty pretty, as usual. Where's Stephens? Didn't he come to pick you up?"

She smiled and began to push her hair back from her forehead with her hand. "I guess not. I haven't seen him, anyhow."

"Oh, for God's sake. Well, you can grab a ride with us, don't worry. Where you want to go?"

"Where do you think Bruce will be? Is he tied up with rushees?"

"Naw I think he's gone to get a keg."

He picked up her suitcase and began to steer her toward the parking lot. "You're welcome to come with Harriet and me. We're going to head on to the house. A party ought to be under way pretty soon."

"I really do appreciate this, Bob," said Mary Clark. "Glad to help out," he said, looking disinterestedly ahead. "You know how Bruce is."

"Yes," she said, and thought, No. How is he?

She smiled at Bob, even though she knew he wasn't watching. She liked him.

She liked all of Bruce's fraternity brothers—indeed, when she talked about them to other people, she would say enthusiastically, "I love them—every one of them," and quite possibly she did. She felt perfectly happy now that she was with Bob. Bruce's failure to appear no longer bothered her.

"Hurry up, Benton," Gerry Foster bellowed from the car window. "Another passenger, I see—hi, Mary Clark!" he shouted. He jumped out, threw Mary Clark's suitcase into the trunk and Mary Clark into the back seat, piled into the front again and roared off without looking to right or left. Mary Clark recovered herself on Bob's lap, and laughed merrily—Gerry was a model of noise and efficiency. They were halfway to Fraternity Row already. He shouted out of the window to other students as he passed them.

His little car pulled up behind the fraternity house and emptied itself of its seven passengers. Mary Clark carried her own suitcase in and ducked into the powder room. It was full of girls, all talking twice as loud and fast as was necessary. Mary Clark started to ask one of them why she hadn't waited for her as she had promised, but she decided that it wouldn't be good policy. After all, she *had* gotten a ride. Probably no one had noticed her alone in the station.

She stood in front of the mirror for ten minutes repairing her lipstick and consoling the girl next to her, whose skirt was drenched with gin. Finally she was satisfied with her looks; smoothing her dress down, she went out into the front room. It was still early; many of the boys had on the khaki pants that they had worn to class, and conversation was relatively quiet. Bob Benton came up from the bar and offered her a beer.

"Your date's coming back in a minute," he said helpfully. "They had a little trouble getting a keg."

Mary Clark looked around the room in search of something to talk about. There wasn't very much going on. It was the time of day, just before the weekend parties have actually begun, when no one can quite decide whether or not it is time to go out and get dinner. The victrola was turned down; for once, nobody was dancing to it, and the last traces of sunshine still filtered through the windows. The light would be gone in fifteen minutes; then everyone would go out to eat, and when they got back, the parties would begin in all the houses. People who hate each other will polish off a few beers and become great friends, thought Mary Clark. Girls who are desperately jealous of each other during the week will pretend to love each other dearly, in order to impress their dates with the quality and great number of their companionships.

Bob punched her. "There he is," he said, and shouted, "Stephens! The answer to a teenage prayer, home from the wars. Meanwhile, back at the ranch—I have snaked your date."

Mary Clark laughed and tried to look as seduced as possible.

"Hey, Stephens!" called Fox Caldwell from the next room, sticking his head through the door. "Where's that keg?" Fox had been pledged only a month before, and was still somewhat brash.

"Knock it off, Foxy. You can exist without the keg till after dinner."

"Pax vobiscum," said Bruce Stephens. He raised his hand and expertly flicked an ash from his cigarette on to a strategic point upon a sweater occupied by Janet Meredith, who was notoriously fast, and was with a different date every weekend. She squealed and retired indignantly to the nearest boy's lap.

"The lady's horny tonight," the favored young man said. He wore a rather ostentatious tie and had bad skin. Mary Clark did not know him.

"Hi, date," said Bruce, and propped his arm and beer can on Mary Clark's shoulder.

"Hi, stranger," she said. She looked at him, hoping that he would respond to this subtlety. He did not. He began to discuss rushing with Larry Moore.

He was only about five feet ten, with most unprepossessing colouring—his hair was a nondescript brown and his face rather pale, but his features were sharp and regular, and his expression so keenly intelligent that it frightened many people who did not know him well. He had a fierce wit and a violent temper, but all his fraternity brothers loved and respected him more than anyone else. They constantly fought for his attention; probably that was why they always teased him so much. Sometimes he was crude and tactless; he had insulted more than one of his friend's dates until they cried or ran out of the room, and some of his more inebriated behaviour was insufferable; but, the year before, when Gerry Foster's father had died suddenly, Bruce had driven him all the way home instead of putting him, alone, on the train—and once when the whole university had ostracized the editor of the student newspaper for defending an administrative opinion, Bruce remained his champion, and almost singlehandedly persuaded the young editor's own fraternity to accept him again. That was the sort of thing which endeared him to his friends.

Mary Clark stood beside him and listened to him as he earnestly explained his theories about a certain desirable rushee. She thought, he is one of the few constructive theorists that I know. He never says that something is wrong unless he has an idea about what could be done to improve it.

Mary Clark loved to speculate in this way about the people that she knew. She particularly enjoyed speculating about Bruce, not only because his personality intrigued her, but because she knew him particularly well. His fraternity brothers had learned to respect Mary Clark too. As far as they knew, she understood him—she never complained to them or to him about his idiosyncrasies. They could not have endured any petulant complaints from Bruce's dates—fortunately it had been a long time since he had dated anyone except Mary Clark. Mary Clark understood him, they said. She's smart and has a lot of common sense—she doesn't let those little things bother her.

Sometimes she wanted more than anything else to scream at them, "Why doesn't he treat me the way other boys treat their girls? Why *doesn't* he tell me I look nice, or ask me out a few *days* in advance instead of a few *minutes*, or pick me up at the train?" Because she was smart and had common sense, however, she never said anything. She pretended that she did not mind.

Sometimes he did not even kiss her goodnight—she never could figure out whether he forgot, or whether he simply didn't want to kiss her. She thought she knew why she loved him—she had no way of being sure, but she thought it was because when he did kiss her it was so unexpected and wonderful—because when he did dance with her or carry her suitcase it was a treat to remember for months—it was twice as exciting, like catching sight of a particularly precious treasure which is usually kept locked up.

"Let's go eat, Moore," said Bruce to his friend, finishing up the conversation.

"Tell that sexy date of yours to quit trying to snow that damn Carter—he's a hopeless case anyhow. Time to get on the road."

That damn Carter, so casually termed a hopeless case, ran his finger under his collar and winked at Mary Clark. She was about to give him a hard time for becoming so smooth so suddenly, when she was caught short by the surprising sight of Bruce holding her coat for her—she slid into it gratefully and they went out to look for a relatively uncrowded restaurant.

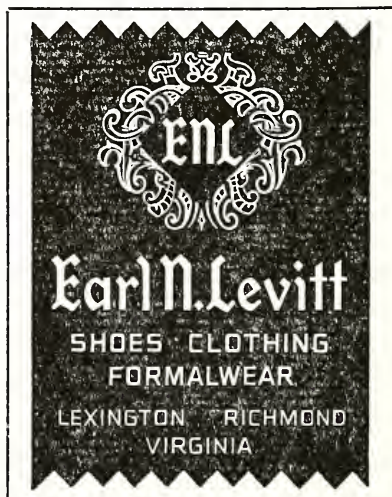
Dinner was only a forty-five minute affair, as both the boys were low on funds and both the girls were anxious to return to the parties which were beginning. Bruce was passing into the second stage of intoxication and was somewhat morose; Larry, still in the first, said jocosely and very loudly, "Stephens is gonna be smashed out of his mind before tonight's over."

"Larry," said Mary Clark, "We thank you for your opinion. May I have a cigarette?"

"God, M. C., don't you ever buy any cigarettes?" Larry grumbled, reaching into his vest pocket.

She laughed. "Now you sound like Bruce." Somehow Mary Clark had always imagined that Larry had learned everything he knew about girls and sex from Bruce. Larry was much taller and much handsomer, but he always seemed a little embarrassed about being smooth, as if he felt himself always in the presence of a superior in the field. Bruce seldom bothered, but one always had the impression that he could do almost anything he wanted with almost any girl.

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Bruce squashed out his cigarette and got up. "The house'll be pretty dead for a while yet," he said. "They've got a combo next door. I expect everybody'll be over there for about an hour."

And so we will go to the fraternity party next door without any further discussion, thought Mary Clark. Bruce Stephens has spoken—'nuff said. She began her thought sarcastically, but the sardonic note dissolved in affection as she watched him, driving back to Fraternity Row, preoccupied, paying her no attention at all. She was used to that; it always bothered her a little, but it was what she was accustomed to, and possibly sometime that night he would do some small, wonderful thing for her which would more than compensate for the neglect.

The night was very long, and party after party became noisier and wilder. Mary Clark was no novice—she had been to a great many fraternity parties, some milder and some worse than others—but that night she began to wish she were back in Bruce's house, where her friends were, where she could just sit down with a drink and hear nothing worse than a little mild profanity. Once she resolutely pushed through an entire roomful of couples, who were still vertical only because there was no room to be otherwise, in order to get to the porch where she hoped for a little space and air, only to be assaulted and practically mauled by a young man who had installed himself outside for that purpose. She was relieved to get back in—at least there was some degree of safety in numbers.

She had not seen Bruce for fully an hour. Her head ached with the noise of a hundred lewd songs, and she began to miss him terribly. When she saw Gerry across the room, she made her way towards him thankfully. Dear blustering Gerry, she thought, as he put his arm around her solicitously, he is *so* bombed; but he'll never be so bombed that he won't be able to help me.

"Where's Bruce, Gerry?" she asked him quietly. "This party's getting awful raunchy. I'd just as soon go back to the house."

"Yeah, I would, too, M.C.," he said, gravely. "Christ, though, I don't know about Bruce. I haven't seen him for about half a year—I mean half an hour. He's pretty stewed M. C."

"Is he really that bad?"

"He just might be. I'll go see if I can find him, if you don't mind staying here."

"Of course not. Thanks Gerry." She leaned against the wall as far out of everyone's way as she could get, and waited for him to come back. When he finally reappeared, he was alone, and she was dismayed to discover how miserable she felt when he told her that Bruce had disappeared.

"You can go back to the house with Julia and me," said Gerry, "and if he doesn't show up I'll see to it that you get to wherever it is you're stayin. It's tough luck, Mary Clark, but I don't reckon Bruce can help it."

I wonder, thought Mary Clark—other people can help it; and she felt cold and unhappy.

Because there was no combo, Bruce's fraternity house was comparatively calm. Most of the brothers and their dates were beginning to migrate back, and the house was full of Mary Clark's friends—she went in with Gerry and his date, and felt that she was home again. She sat down with some of the boys who continued to admire her for her composure, and to congratulate her for understanding Bruce, and for not being angry because he had disappeared.

They were her friends and she loved them, but what they were saying made her anxious, and she wanted nothing more desperately than to see Bruce come in.

Suddenly he did come in. He stood in the door as if—as if he expected everybody to shut up and fall down on their *knees* or something, thought Mary Clark, who could see, even from the other side of the room where she sat, that he was drunker than she had ever seen him before. She sat straight up in apprehension.

He began to walk across to her, very slowly, very deliberately. He managed to walk in an almost straight line, but it wavered a little in spite of all he could do. Mary Clark was afraid of him for the first time, but she also loved him, and she got up to meet him. She smiled, and waited for him to say something.

He was remarkably controlled, which was typical of him, even when drunk. He spoke in a perfectly reasonable way to Gerry, who was a little less appalled when he saw that Bruce could still articulate quite well.

Bruce looked Mary Clark up and down, methodically. Without taking his eyes away from her once, he took her hand and went with her into the back room—a small, comfortable sort of lounge, which was completely empty, and he kissed her.

He kissed her more than he had ever kissed her before, and Mary Clark, who had been dreaming of it ever since she had known him, was happy for ten whole minutes—but he was drunk, and she had forgotten that. All at once he nearly overpowered her. She became so afraid that he would pick her up and carry her out before she could even try to control him that she cried out, and broke away.

Several of the boys heard her scream, and came running in. Larry patted her shoulder rather awkwardly and said, "He *is* kind of smashed, isn't he? I guess we'd better put him to bed and take you home. I'm sorry, M. C., no kidding."

Bruce glanced at him with withering contempt. He said levelly, "Nobody is putting me to bed."

Mary Clark took a deep breath. "Oh, don't be ridiculous, Bruce," she said. "I can get a ride, easily."

He smiled at her. "You damned self-righteous little bitch," he said; and he took a package of cigarettes out of his pocket, extricated one, and lit it, but not without a very unsteady hand.

Mary Clark stood and looked at him. She looked at Gerry and Larry and Bob and Fox and all of the others—curious, meaningless faces, gaping. She did not burst into tears or run out of the room. Instead she suddenly clenched her fists and cried, "Why doesn't he take me home the way other girl's dates do? Why *doesn't* he?"

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Convulsive clutching
Of her claws.
In her purr
Murmurs the tiny trumpeting
Of elephants from Burma. India.
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A revolution stirs in Mongolia. Tibet.
Her yellow tail moves restlessly,
And a ripple washes against
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OCTOBER, 1956

The Brambler

SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE, SWEET BRIAR, VIRGINIA



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Mr. Jefferson and I

AS LONG as I can remember, the University of Virginia has been distinctly a part of my affections. My grandfather was a professor of history and taught there for forty-nine years. I have been in Charlottesville for part of every summer since I was born, and not even a very little girl can fail to absorb some of the feeling which is so much a part of an institution such as the University, most particularly when her family has been connected with that institution for so long.

As a regular vacation routine, I used to walk around the Grounds with my father. We would climb the steps to the Rotunda, and every year I demanded an explanation of the "Z" which was painted on those steps by one of the societies at the University so long ago that no one considers it disfiguring any more.

After the ascent we would go into the Rotunda. Nobody ever told *me* in tourist-guide tones that it was the most important landmark there, the building designed by Jefferson for his school—first used as a library, now as student government offices. I knew that it was the symbol of the University without being told. Anyone would know it. It is raised upon a small hill above the buildings around it, and the nobility of its architecture leaves no room for doubt as to its eminence. It made no difference to me what it was used for. It was the Rotunda under any circumstances. I knew that it burned in 1895, and that my grandfather helped to carry out the statue of Jefferson while the walls were in flames. It was rebuilt in the same red Virginia brick, and the flattened dome dominated Charlottesville again.

Behind the Rotunda stretches the Lawn, green and placid, with its nine pavilions, all different, designed by Jefferson with Greek inspiration; and beyond, running parallel, are the Ranges. My father and I would walk down to Cabell Hall under the columns, and I remember how serene and quiet it always was. No matter how heavy the traffic on University Avenue, the silence of the Lawn is broken only by the chapel bell and the leaves, brushed by the breeze.

We would cross the Lawn at its end and come back on the other side. This time the Rotunda steps were easier, going down. Halfway, we would always stop to pay our respects to Mr. Jefferson, who sits there in the centre, in bronze.

No true native of Charlottesville refers to the man of Monticello as "Thomas Jefferson." It is always "Mr. Jefferson." Nor can anyone who loves the University escape him. From his home on the mountain to Farmington and the Serpentine Wall in the valley, his influence is deeply felt—both consciously and conscientiously by the professors, the scholars, and the "old guard" of Charlottesville, and, more unconsciously, by the tourists, the younger residents, even those students who ostensibly care nothing for tradition.

His statue has been tarred and feathered many times, true, and there are tales of desecrations even worse; but, afterwards there is always the apologetic murmur from the student newspaper, "It is fairly certain that undergraduates from another institution were responsible." This same newspaper quotes one of his finer statements as its motto, and in its pages also, he is "Mr. Jefferson."

We also went up to Monticello every summer. Not even in the busiest season was it unbearably crowded. Mr. Jefferson's house never has the dreadful impersonal tourist crush found at Mount Vernon; at least it never used to—I hope it is no more overrun with mobs now than it was a few years ago. Nothing could be more inappropriate than a great many noisy visitors trampling his lawn, milling about in his dining room paid for but uninvited, crowding and shoving to see the ingenious little inventions which he devised for his own use, not for display before strangers. At Monticello, I always felt like an honoured guest, and I could look at the study and the portraits and the fishpond as long as I liked.

It is hardly surprising that I am prejudiced in favor of Mr. Jefferson. A little thought on the matter and a great deal of association with his world and his University have led me to consider him the greatest man America has produced.

Now that I am a little older I have become somewhat more familiar with another phase of University life. I don't find so much time for walking on the Lawn any more; Mr. Jefferson might be somewhat taken aback by the very gay Social-Life-Around-the-Grounds. The big weekends are as much a part of the school by now as is the architecture; but sometimes, especially on a late Sunday morning when everybody is a bit hungover after a surfeit of the aforesaid weekends, I find myself hoping that some of the girls who come to the University love the pavilions in the rain, and the Rotunda, large, solid, and benevolent, watching over its small charges—the fraternity houses—along Madison Lane almost at its feet, as much as they do those redoubtable parties and the lesser landmarks such as Carroll's and the Corner.

Last summer I was dating a boy who was stationed in Washington, D. C. with the Navy. I had met him in Charlottesville, and he had just graduated from Virginia. I went up to Washington with him in late June, and we found time to play tourist while we were there. Both of us had our special places; Kenneth liked the government buildings, and I made him take me to the National Cathedral and walk up and down the streets in old Georgetown. There was one place, however, which we instinctively saved for last. We never mentioned it; we knew without saying where we both wanted most to go.

It was about eight, and nearly dark, when we finally drove to the Tidal Basin. We were both dressed for a party, but neither of us had any intention of going to it until we finished our sightseeing.

The Memorial was closed when we got there; we slipped under the rope and

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tried to be quiet, but our heels clicked on the marble more noisily than we had intended. The guard was most obliging, however—I suppose the idea of the two young Virginians coming loyally to the Memorial at night appealed to him somehow. He let us in with hardly an objection.

No one was there, then, except Kenneth and me and the watchman. The night was still and warm. The inside of the building glimmered under the pale lights. I remember thinking how well it was illuminated—the interior was dim but perfectly visible.

We walked all the way around, reading the words on the walls. They were familiar, but I liked them more than ever, here in Washington—wonderfully literate expressions of the democratic ideal, monuments to the man. The quotation we liked best was the shortest. It was inscribed on the dome, and went completely round. Turning slowly so that I could see it, I read it out loud. I have never forgotten it.

"I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

"That's quite something," Kenny said in awe. "And he meant it, too."

"Of course he did," I said. "He said it in one of his own personal letters."

We moved to the centre. His statue stood there, brooding. Kenney smiled and inclined his head slightly, as though he were being introduced. "Mr. Jefferson, sir," he said.

I didn't really curtsey, but I felt as though I should.



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Cracked lobster bodies
Are spewed into a brilliant
Cascade of foam.
Broken bits of glass sparkling
Burst like firecrackers.

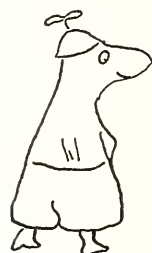
The Pines

THE pines are not trees.
They are old men
Who moan in the wind.
They are old men who sigh,
Remembering in their swaying
The light breezes of their youth,
When they repelled
The twistings of the weather
To stand straight against
The bare stone cliff.
Now even the cliff is crumbling,
And the pines bend,
And there are no breezes,
Only the wind,
Only tempest.

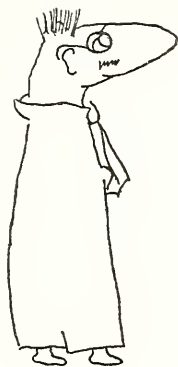


BEEPLE

THIS is a bit about Beeple . . . The significance of Beeple first came to me in Pennsylvania Station when I was waiting for a train. There was nothing to do! With vague thoughts in mind of O'Henry, I had pulled out paper and with pencil poised was staring at a washer-lady across the way. The stare had faded into a day-dream, when a faint irritating feeling intruded. Pushing my eyes out of day-dream focus, I recognized the cause of the disturbance. It was Beeple, beeples banging this way and that way, —all the bumping, bustling beeples in the world, it seemed.



What is it that distinguishes Beeple? I don't know exactly, other than that beeples are intensely and satisfyingly caught up in their own affairs. Bus drivers are beeples, as are board members of all sorts, and bores at cocktail parties . . . Beeple very often wear glasses, not of the usual horn-rim variety that get seen through, but of the type that reflect back . . . Beeple babies don't believe in guardian



fairies . . . Beeple men never sit with julips under trees pondering about angels on a pin-head . . . Famous lovers have never been Beeple. To imagine a beeeple woman reclining on a silken pillow feeding figs into the mouth of her beloved is the most unlikely kind of speculation, and to imagine a beeeple man posing in a ruby smoking jacket before the fire is sheer folly.

Mother is a neophyte beeeple. The Ladies Symphony Society sees her as a woman who carries a huge satchel bag filled with lists, and who wears a cigarette hanging from her lips. Her children and husband see her as the woman who locks the bathroom door and soaks for hours in a steaming tub with Agatha Christies; who loses her glasses and adjusts the thermostat on a summer day to 90°, leaving the guppies she could not refuse keeping for her vacationing friends to dive for air in their bowls on the radiator and the hamster to pant beneath his leaf of lettuce.

Dachshunds are Beeple with a tremendous flair. They are forever busy, forever positive that they are in the right place at the right time, forever concerned. Dachshunds are never caught off guard. They would never admit to the existence of Chance or Fate; they manage their own lives without need of such.

Maybe everybody is a Beeple, I don't know, everybody that is who Gets Somewhere or Does Something.

This is all I have to say about Beeple. Funny, it's only ever so often that I get a chance to see them . . . Well, must rush off . . . I have a million things to do!



Oriental Summer

BUT why Japan?" is the question I am invariably asked when one learns of my trip this past summer. Just lucky, I guess, is the answer I prefer. But to be more explicit my cousin and I were sent by our grandfather on a study tour, called STOP, sponsored by San Francisco State College. He had been in Japan the summer before on business and was very favorably impressed. Upon returning he mentioned that he would like to send my cousin and me. We never gave him an opportunity to change his mind. I knew practically nothing about Japan, but thought it would be interesting to visit that strange and exotic land. However I never had that sensation of the strange and exotic after arriving. The people were so human and the charm of the country so delicate and intimate that I felt at home almost immediately. Of course, there are many differences.

Japan is composed primarily of four islands, the largest and most densely populated one, being Honshu, on which our trip was confined entirely except for a short trip to Beppu, a tourist resort on the island Kyushu. Although we were on a tour composed entirely of Americans, my cousin Mary and I spent as much of our spare time with the Japanese as possible. Everyone was exceedingly friendly, so it was not hard meeting people. The very first night we were there we made the acquaintance of a former roommate of the Crown Prince, whom we mistook for a bell hop and asked to show us to our room. We were mortified when we discovered who he was. A fortunate mistake perhaps, for Esakasan became a good friend of ours and was wonderful about showing us Tokyo. Esaka was very different from the people we met in the lower classes, who had not been so rigidly trained in childhood and therefore were more flexible and spontaneous.

It has been said that the key to understanding Japan is over population. Perhaps this is over simplifying matters, but this problem is basic and all important to the Japanese people, and is perhaps a unifying thread between the classes. This problem of over population is dealt with in a wonderful way. It is very common to find a number of people doing the job that one could easily do alone. In such a situation the vigorous competition between individuals that exists in the United States would be foolish. Also waste is practically non-existent. Every piece of land is used to the best advantage; every bowl of rice is cleaned. But what pleasure do these hard working people have? A "pursuit of happiness" that we tend to think of as basic in all individuals is foreign to Japanese, or was until the recent influx of Western ideas. Many Japanese whose lives seem to us to be a continuous toil appear to enjoy their work, or at least certain aspects of it. In many instances I noticed that the people, in spite of their industry or their poverty are able to separate themselves completely for a brief interval from the strain and stress of their problems. You see an old woman in the streets shining shoes for a living. She does not have enough food or clothing or perhaps no place to call home. Upon close observation, you may see a certain sparkle in her eyes or a restrained smile when delighted by the action of a child or a tourist walking clumsily in gatas. (the traditional shoe of Japan)

There is a necessity for the Japanese to have proper relations with their superiors and inferiors. This social responsibility is a burden upon every individual. The web society, the strict relationship between the people of different classes, is probably what allows for the tremendous external changes in industry or government with only minimum internal changes. An external example of the web society is the bowing practice. Acquaintances always bow to each other, the one in the lower class or position in a family bows the deeper. The types of bows vary greatly from the bowing of the head to a bow on the knees to the emperor. Mary and I completely upset the bowing system by bowing to everyone we met on the streets, making no distinction as to class. The people were genuinely amused and never thought we were making fun of them. In one particularly amusing instance we met a man returning from a festival who had obviously been drinking. He began to bow to us. Mary returned his bows with equal zeal and the two kept it up for so long that I was soon bowing too, doubled up from laughter.

As our Japanese guide told us, the new and the old aspects are equally important in understanding the country. On the streets there is always a mixture of the old and the new, the traditional kimonos for the men and women and western style clothes. The Japanese wear their native clothing with a grace and charm which is usually absent when they dress in Western style. Kimonos give an effect of casualness, combined with restraint with their long loose sleeves and wide tight obis. It is not unusual to see men in long white underclothes on the streets. On a train for instance, the men may remove their suits, hang them up neatly, and get off looking amazingly fresh. A rather nice custom, I think.

I have always heard about the beauty of the Japanese countryside, but it is more beautiful than I imagined. A respect for the natural way is always shown when nature is altered for buildings or gardens. An American architect studying in Japan said, "A long history of primitive contact with nature developed in the Japanese a profound respect for natural form; in it they felt inexorably linked. And the natural, organic way became to them the religious and the right way." I liked the architecture of Japan very much. It shows this close relationship with nature in the materials chosen, the site selected, and the style used. The architecture of the homes is very similar for the wealthy and the poor—all made of unpainted wood, using the natural wood and straw colors. It is a pleasure to visit a Japanese home because of the lack of materialism. Everything appears to have a purpose.

Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples are a link with the past, the Shinto Shrine

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being the older, for Shintoism is the native religion of the country. The style of the Buddhist temple shows the Chinese influence and is not with its bright colors and ornate designs as appealing to me as the simplicity of the Shinto shrines. I always had a wholesome feeling, a feeling that I can take a deep breath when visiting a Shinto Shrine, which is quite different from the closed-in feeling I often get when visiting a cathedral. Shintoism and Buddhism are today still the popular religions of Japan. Many people are members of both religions. There is a grace and charm not only in the homes and shrines but in all aspects of the Japanese way of life, whether it is arranging a meal or a bowl of flowers, walking across the room or serving tea on a train.

These are my impressions from a month's visit in a limited part of Japan. I do not prefer travel in the strict sense of the term. The idea of any tourist anywhere blustering into a country, trying frantically to see everything and do everything and seeing things through his own eyes is repulsive to me. Making a trip of the type I made is after a fashion doing exactly that. But the attitude and the desires of a visitor to understand a strange culture is as important as the length of the trip and the territory covered. The sympathy you may get with a country in a short visit and the pleasure of seeing the beauties of a country outweigh the misconceptions and false impressions you get on a brief tour.



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L^{YNN}

Harper

Mackie

stumbled

down

the

hill

(holding her side).

They got me. I've been shot.

—THIRTEEN TIMES—

(in the side).

Lynn d
 e g
 l r
 b o
Harper m u
 u n
Mackie t in a heap. d She did not move.

 suddenly, started
 up scratching
Lynn Harper Mackie sat and her back side.
Lynn Harper Mackie had died

 T H
 N A N I
 O N A LL

NOT BELIEVE?

“I DO not Believe,” said the fool;
They turned and stared;
He ignored their surprise —
As if he cared!

At first they probed, like a surgeon,
With cold Steel;
They would find the growth and remove it,
The place would heal.

He awoke with pain from the drug,
And screamed aloud;
Broke free from the straps on the table;
They said, "He is Proud."

They began to rebuke him, sternly;
He was his own;
They said, "He is mad, it is useless,"
And left him alone.

Something lacked in solitude,
He claimed reprieve:
Bitterly he called them back—
"All right then—I Believe."

SONIA

SONIA stomps. Every step she hits the floor with her foot as if she wants to crush something. Bam, bam, bam. Here is Sonia. Bam.

Sonia talks to herself, too. Yah, yah. Oh, this heat and my back hurt, too. Yah. I'm old woman. Yah. And my hair is falling out. See, it comes out. Yah.

Sonia takes three hours to wash the dishes, even when just two of us eat here. She washes a glass. Clink, clink. Then she rinses it. Clink. Bam, bam. She gets a towel to dry it and then — bam, bam — she puts the glass up. Clink.

When Sonia mops, I think she uses a wooden mop. She hits the walls—whack—and the baseboards—whack, whack—and the table—wham. Bam, whack, bam, whack. Sonia is mopping.

And someday my nerves will go. Snap.



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OUT OF THIS WORLD

THE FRATERNITY house door burst open, and emitted from within a staggering stream of couples.

"Hi ya, Bob—hey who's your date?"

"Well if it isn't John McIvor; where'd you get *her*?"

"Great combo at the Phi Eps—Daddy King's playin'."

"Hell, you dope, it's a closed party, doncha know?"

"Well here we are." She turned to her date and smiled her usual big-weekend, blind-date smile. Yes, here she was at the University on Openings week-end with another one. Those infernal blind dates! Hadn't she had enough in her freshman and sophomore years? But this time she couldn't refuse, as her Aunt had gotten the date. Relatives, relatives, how they had to be placated at all times.

She wondered how she had escaped being mangled in the scrambled mass of humanity she had just left. They called it dancing. Well, she didn't. It was a modern method of torture, composed of bodies hurling themselves through space—what little there was. It was another form of the medieval jousting tournament. However the weapons in this case were elbows and feet, not to mention the psychological effect of a whole fraternity and their dates crowded into a room bathroom size! The tear gas and smog qualities of the smokey suspension and the rasping noise issuing in shrieks, roars, and groans from various musical instruments composing a combo heightened the atmospheric intensity. Then there were the "Hail fellow well met" hearties who squeezed you in a brotherly embrace, meanwhile spilling their drink over your new red dress . . . They say suffering enobles one, and by the end of this weekend I'll be the Saint Joan-Queen Elizabeth type!

She had fought her way out of that den of iniquity and here she was on the threshold of another. Such fun, this "fraternity hopping." Now, now, must not allow that ugly old sarcasm to sneak into your thoughts, Sally. You're going to be what is known as a good date, remember? Chin up, smile, tummy in, that's a girl! Make him proud of you.

How different the fraternity looked now from a few hours ago. Jack brought her here with her cousin Bob and his date Ann. The combo hadn't arrived yet and the cleaning-up committee, which Jack joined reluctantly was making preparations for the evening's orgy. Ann and Bob wandered over to the piano; Ann began to play. At first the fraternity brothers hadn't known how to react, for Ann was playing real music, songs like "Old Man River" and "The Song from Moulin Rouge" instead of the fashionable apologetic jabbings at the keyboard. Lo and Behold there was Bob singing—enthusiastically, too! Tut, Tut! Didn't he know no one sang in a fraternity until early morning, when one had his full share of beer. Sally's date was embarrassed, she knew. He retreated hastily to mull over this new development. What would they think about his bringing this couple here? He could say that he had to, since Sally and Bob were cousins, which was true, but all the same—Oh well . . .

He approached them with a fatherly, let-them-have-their-little-fun smile. After a surreptitious inspection, the scattered fraternity brothers decided to return to their chores, humming the tunes under their breath.

But now the fraternity house had lost all original distinction. It was merely another playground. A throbbing mass of humanity was romping inside, a Universal thirst was being quenched, Universal social niceties and necessities were being performed, for the Virginia gentleman was observing his recess, acquiring that important "other" side of his liberal education.

She pushed her way into the fraternity hall.

"Hey Tom, Tommy . . . Tom", a muttered dammit and Jack began again. "Tommy, -Tooommmmm". Oh, this reminds me of an aspirin ad, Sally thought feverishly. She turned to make the Approved Weekend Conversation with Jack. Earlier conversation had been quite tedious, but now it was becoming rather fun. She had acquired the conversational ability of an almost-tight girl. She knew it too. Drunk with weariness, with a sense of "I don't care-ness" and gifted with a dramatic flair she was indeed mentally tight. Natural talent for mimicry had helped. From observation of several girls, plus a memory of Grace Kelly in her "High Society" role, she was now a convincing actress. Convincing only to her, she thought, as Jack didn't know her idiosyncracies well enough to notice any difference.

"Look at my gold bobby pin, isn't it simply beautiful?"

"Puddles, Puddles, Puddles—life is just one big puddle, isn't it, Jack?"

"Oh do you really think so? Well you're sweet to say so, but it's really you who are good dancer. No, you're just being modest."

"Well I just admire you so for choosing that profession . . . I've always wanted to meet an anthropologist."

Here she was being the much portrayed Southerner, the so-called typical Southern girl. Sho' nouf! Even her accent had become heavier. She thought suspiciously about that glass of gingerale, then dismissed the thought, for she had watched it being poured.

"Henry, Henry—Heeenrrriiii" Oh no, not again. These healthy lungs,—they would deafen her yet.

"Greatest guy, always stewed, but funny as heck, a real character."

"C'mere, listen, did you hear that, Sally? Sounded just like a train, didn't he? Good ole Dick — what a Sport."

His laughter rose in a shrill crescendo, then subsided in gasps to a low wheeze.

"Joe, Hey Joe—JJJ OOO EEE. Want cha ta meet mi date. This is ahh, Sally ahh . . ."

"Keller" she said quietly.

"Yeah, knew it all along—just kiddin' Ha! Boy, that last drink has just begun to hit. I don't drink much youunderstan, jus' 'nuf to be sociable."

"So you're Joe's date huh, well honey, better watch 'em. Yeah, Man! Say . . . Do You Know . . ." He launched forth into the Approved getting-to-know-you game. Sometimes she felt like saying

"Do You Know—who invented this ridiculous game?"

She smiled in a long-lost-friend way at a Sweet Briar girl in the usual fashion.

"Why Ellen, good to see you."

"My name's Mary but that's all right," a glassy stare and a forgiving nod.

Some girl began doing an exhibition dance displaying her feminine assets to their worst advantage. The packed mass of humanity made room for her and shifted spasmodically to the hoarse whisperings of a fat colored man imitating Billy Eckstine. A horn wailed and a piano clanged uncertainly in the background, these sounds mingling with the plunking of a bass violin by a greasy young colored man, swaying groggily as the sweat streamed down his face. Jack yanked her after him towards the center of the crowd. An elbow here, a kick, a shove, three pushes, five excuseme's and she had arrived. His beery sweaty paw clutched her right hand as his left slid possessively around her waist. Her face was ground into the rough tweed of his jacket. She heard the blaring combo over the scraping feet, the shrill loudness of a hundred people talking at once, and Jack's heavy breathing. Some boy knocked against her. Jack swung her into an inch space between two grey flannel walls; she felt her feet slipping on the beer-wet floor. Her dress seemed made of stone instead of wool as the heat became more intense. Her eyes smarted from Jack's cigarette and she hastily avoided being splashed by a dropped paper cup.

"Isn't this the best party you've ever seen. Boy, it beats any of those others! Isn't this the best fraternity?" He giggled self-consciously at his partisan statement.

"What a party! I'm having a wonderful time, aren't you?"

"Just wonderful, Jack . . . It's simply out of this world!!"

ANONYMOUS

Brownie

A SMALL brown face
Made browner by wondering
Why can't we go?
Who says we can't?
The reply—
It is so.
Then
I pledge allegiance to the flag
With liberty and justice for all
Except me?

SONJA P. KARSEN

Assistant Professor of Modern Languages

Labyrinth — (Translation of Jaime Torres Bodet)

BURIED alive
in an infinite
labyrinth of mirrors,
I hear myself, I follow myself,
I look for myself
on this smooth wall of silence.

But I do not find myself.

I touch, I listen, I look.
Through all the echoes
of this labyrinth
my voice
is trying to reach me . . .

But I do not hear it.

Someone here is a prisoner,
in this cold
brilliant inclosure,
labyrinth of mirrors:
someone, whom I am imitating.
If he goes, I go away.
If he returns, I return.
If he sleeps, I dream.
—"Is it you"? I say to myself . . .

But I do not answer.

Pursued, wounded
by this same voice
—of which I do not know
whether it is mine or not—
in this endless echo
of an endless memory,
in this infinite
labyrinth of mirrors
buried alive.

Dedalo— (See preceding page)

ENTERRADO vivo
en un infinito
dédalo de espejos,
me oigo, me sigo,
me busco en el liso
muro del silencio.

Pero no me encuentro.

Palpo, escucho, miro.
Por todos los écos
de este laberinto,
un acento mío
está pretendiendo
llegar a mi oído . . .

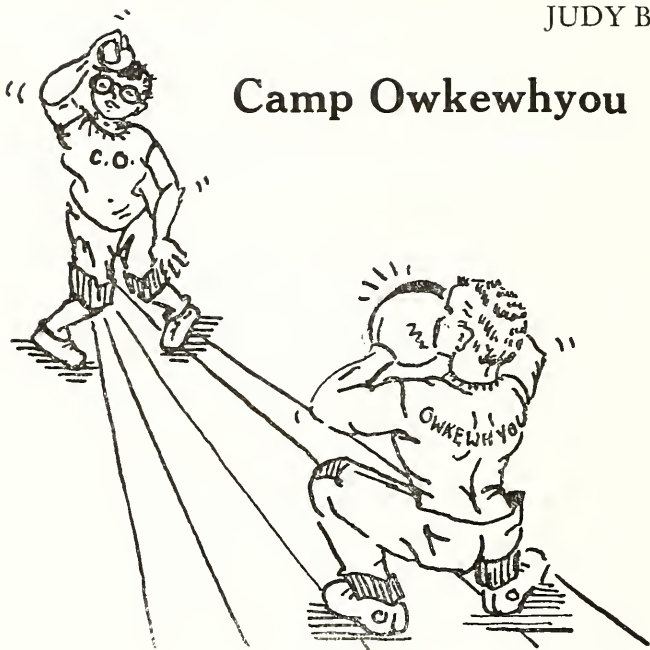
Pero no lo advierto.

Alguien está preso
aquí, en este frío
lucido recinto
dédalo de espejos:
alguien, al que imito.
Si se va, me alejo.
Si regresa, vuelvo.
Si se duerme, sueño.
—"Eres tu?" me digo . . .

Pero no contesto.

Perseguido, herido
por el mismo acento
—que no sé si es mío—
contra el eco mismo
del mismo recuerdo,
en este infinito
dédalo de espejos
enterrado vivo.

Camp Owkewhyou



"Nestled among the pines of Lake Shinnecock, near the quaint town of Kentville, lies Camp Owkewhyou (pronounced O-K-Y-U.) Founded by James Wright, Camp Owkewhyou has been the summer home of one hundred happy boys for twenty-five years.

"It is our aim (1) to develop and maintain physical health, (2) to nourish social adjustment and development and (3) to attain high ideals and perspectives of life. We aim to develop the personality of each camper through self expression, to stimulate initiative and to make leaders of our campers. There is a complete and emphasized program of sports at Camp Owkewhyou, and each boy participates with an enthusiasm producing a 'carry-over' value into living relationships outside of camp . . ."

ROBBBIE Eliot didn't especially want to go to camp. He didn't especially not want to. His father said all red-blooded American boys went to camp. The sooner the better. (Robbie was ten.) Makes 'em leaders. What was it that catalog said? "We aim to develop the personality of each camper." "Robbie needs a little push," said his father, "needs to get out and play more. Camp'll be just the thing. They emphasize sports, it says, and he needs sports, and other boys, instead of sitting around home with you."

"Yes, dear," said his mother. "I think you're right. We'd better hurry though. I'll mail this form back, and start on the list of clothing and name tags tomorrow."

Besides, she thought, it will be good to have a summer to ourselves for a change.

"Does he want to go?"

"Yes, I think he does. He's old enough, after all. It isn't as if he wouldn't be unsupervised or anything. They have lots of good counsellors, you know . . ."

"Mature judgment, a sympathetic understanding of boys, professional experience and teaching skill distinguish the staff of Camp Owkewhyou.

Our counsellors are selected for their understanding and intelligence in dealing with many individual personalities in children . . ."

"Buck" Johnson had been a camper at Owkewhyou for three years, and he had won the "Best Athlete" award twice. Now, he was a counsellor; he taught sports—baseball, volleyball, football, basketball. James Wright once said he could not imagine the place without him.

Buck liked to wear white T-shirts, with no undershirt, and Levis with no belt. He was built for it. He'd won a four year football scholarship to the University of Michigan, so he didn't need to get a high-paying job in the summer; the camp paid him enough.

He hoped he would get older kids this year. He had asked for them, but there was not much chance as the age groups rotated, and he had had the older kids last year. He liked the older ones because you could have more fun with them, they weren't so dependent and they could do "things" better . . .

"From the first day, our campers enjoy a well-balanced program, which includes healthful meals, rest, constructive activity and, throughout all, the comradeship of boys of the same age . . ."

They were herded off the bus and Buck read off the lists of living quarters, and then led his own group to the cabin. Robbie followed him.

He helped each boy unpack, moving down the row of bunks and talking with each boy as he helped. Robbie's bunk was next to the far-wall, so he was last. He bunked next to Johnny.

Johnny had only bought a duffle, so he didn't take long. Buck came to a scuffed football.

"Do you like football, Johnny?"

"Yes, sir," said he, enthusiastically.

He looks good, thought Buck. Good shoulders. Buck's hands gripped the ball and he made a fake pass, remembering.

"Tell you what, John," he said. "We're going to have a baseball game tonight after supper. You come see me first thing, and I'll see what's open."

Buck turned to Robbie.

"Well, you sure brought enough," he commented, opening a large trunk and a duffle. "Planning to stay a year?"

They laughed, those others who had finished unpacking and had flung themselves on the surrounding bunks, watching.

Robbie mumbled, "No."

Buck unpacked the rest without a word, down to the baseball mit his father had given him when he was six.

"Did you just get a new mit? It's a good one."

"No, sir, I've had it a while," said Robbie, quietly.

"What do you play?"

"Right field." Robbie was glad his father wasn't there so he would have to say "first." There weren't many balls at right. There was a silence.

"Let's go get some chow," said Buck turning to them all.

The camp sat at long tables, laden with milk pitchers and platters of conglomeration. Robbie helped himself as they passed by.

"And what's your name?" asked the counsellor at the head of the table.

"Robert Eliot."

"Where are you from, Bob?"

"New York."

"That's nice." There was a pause.

"How about that boy next to you. What's your name . . ."

Robbie kept his eyes down. He wanted some more casserole, but he did not dare ask . . .

Buck was wearing a white T-shirt with Owkewhyou spelled out on it. He was so muscular that it was hard to read the letters 'ewhy'. He put in the boys that looked the best for the first innings, so they would have the advantage of the light, and figured on putting the rest in latter. Johnny was at shortstop.

From behind the pitcher, Buck yelled, "Play ball!"

Robbie sat alone, until the ninth inning, hoping no one would notice him.

They did.

"Robbie, you come in at third!"

Most of the spectators were wrestling on the grass and running around; there was little interest in the game, for which Robbie was grateful.

He had begun to hope that he would not get anything; when a weak batter bunted a grounder down the third base line; Robbie got it and threw as hard as he could with his eyes shut. He threw with his elbow out, like a girl. When he opened his eyes, he saw the pitcher with the ball, throwing to first. The runner did not even have to overrun the base.

The next fly made the third out, and they went to their cabins.

* * *

Dear Dad,

Today we played baseball and won 9-6. I played third base. Buck is my counsellor and he plays football at the University of Michigan.

We eat at long tables and can't sit down until everyone is in. They blow a bugle to get us up and eat and go to bed.

I bunk next to Johnny. He is a first baseman. He can do a flip, too.

Love, Robbie

When Robbie came home in August, his parents met him.

"How was it, son?" asked his father, picking up his suitcase and leading the way to the car. "It looks like you've lost some weight."

"It was O.K."

"How was your counsellor?" asked his mother.

"Buck was fine."

"Did you learn to dive?" asked his father.

"Sort of."

"What else did you do?"

"I made some belts and a wallet and some moccasins. We had to tool them ourselves, and we used a little knife that moves around, called a swivel knife. Then we beveled and we dyed the leather—Here I'll show you!" He put the suitcase down on the fender of a car, and took out a belt. See? I made it for you, Dad. There's your name in the back. I made one for everyone—Granny, and

Grandpa—everyone. The crafts counsellor said I did more than anyone, and it was the best." He handed it to his father.

"That's nice. Thank you, Robbie. Did you play a lot of baseball and games?"
"Yes."

"Do you think you'll want to go next year?"

"I guess so."

"Swell."

They noticed in the coming weeks that he had become much quieter.

"When Owkewhyou campers return home with faces bronzed from the sun, glowing with health from living in the stimulating fresh Maine air, perfectly adjusted to their winter experiences, they look back on a summer of warm comradeship, excellent leadership, clean sportsmanship and happy hours, and look forward with anticipation to the next summer's camp experience. They remember hours in the water, arts and crafts, riding, sailing. They remember friends, warm campfires, and the way they joined hands to sing the camp song:

Camp Owkewhyou, Camp Owkewhyou,
With our voices we praise thee,
Forever with thee our hearts lie,
For what you have helped us to be

Camp Owkewhyou, Camp Owkewhyou,
We leave but soon to return,
Through the long winter with a sigh,
We remember, while our hearts burn "

Quoted material is taken in part from the Fire Place Lodge Camp, Long Island, and also from other camp catalogs. Some is original.

BETH MEARS

Release

I AM alive, alive, alive!
It is more than I can bear
To be alive, to thrive
In a snare.

Comes death, death, death,
I drop the seive;
Death, death, **now**,
I live.

Sea

I THREW a broken clam shell into the mouth of the monster
and it disappeared in its gullet.

A blue periwinkle squiggled into the sand and as if on cue
the sun broke through.

Golden fingers twinkled on the cascading white tops
and I arose.

Walking away, I turned to see the imprint of my toes
melt under the crush of blue.



JOSE

JOSE was the most popular Indian of a small village located in the mountains two hundred miles from the town of Bolivar. There he lived, part of a group of human beings, unconscious of their poverty and the hard work. The Indians spoke a mixture of Spanish and Quechua. They were half naked. They had long hair and nails, large feet hard as stones, and dry lips; they lived in a state of insensibility toward life.

All of them looked alike, but about Jose there was something different. He was taller and his complexion was lighter. He spoke better Spanish, and there was light in his eyes and laughter in his face. Carrying a little guitar, he would sing songs never heard before by the other Indians. He came to the village when he was 12 years old. —From where?—From far away—was his reply pointing into distance. He did not know who his parents were.

The Indians of the village hunted, fished and planted corn and vegetables. In their spare time, they made baskets of straw, necklaces of colored beans, knitted articles trimmed with birds' feathers, and clay pottery. Once in a while, they went to the nearest villages to sell their articles. With the money they bought matches, knives, salt and occasionally some sugar.

The houses in the villages were very poor; there were no chairs or tables. There was no kitchen. For doors and windows there were holes to let the light, air and water come in. The family slept on the floor. They cooked between stones and they ate with their hands. If they washed themselves, as they did not very often, they went to the river. Nothing changed, life in the village was nothing but a routine of daily events; babies were born and people would die.

Jose brought new interest to the small village; he went to towns far away to sell the products of the village. He obtained much money and when he came back from these trips, besides the money, he brought all kinds of stories to tell the people. When he arrived from his trips, all the people of the village would listen with great interest. If the story was sad, they were sad, if it was funny they would laugh; and if it was fantastic, they would marvel. When he finished, one of the Indians would tell him what had happened in the village during his absence. Then he delivered the money to each of them, and until his next trip he was compelled to repeat the same story—over and over again.

In search of new experiences, Jose started to make these trips longer. His absences from the village were longer and longer. He used to leave the village very early in the morning carrying all the products for sale and his guitar on his shoulder. The Indians would see him walking fast down the road, playing his guitar and singing. Every time he left, the joy and happiness of the village left with him, and the life in the small village became monotonous and sad.

As the trips became longer, the stories grew more fantastic. In one of these trips he reached Ciudad Bolivar and he stayed there for forty days. When he came back he told the people incredible things, he sang new songs and he brought beautiful things: ribbons of different colors, a tie, red and blue buttons and an umbrella. He told them about the ship he saw, and the pretty women with painted mouths, in silk dresses. He told them about a house called "cinema," where people went to look at walking ghosts.

From his next trip, he did not come back for three months. He brought more money than ever before and more things for the people; but his stories were shorter. It seemed as if he had left his soul far away in that beautiful city.

He left again, and the village waited and waited month after month. They had so many things to tell him: four Indians had died, six had been born, a lot of them were sick from a disease they did not know. But Jose never came back. Civilization had claimed him, first the City Bolivar, and then . . . Who knows who?

My story is a very simple story. I have tried to express in it the poverty and the lack of means of survival that are making these small Indian towns disappear through the influence of the cities.

Jose characterizes the awakening of the more aware Indians who leave behind them an empty life, and seek the emotions and excitement that the life in a big city can offer them. They become absorbed by the crowds and the atmosphere. In the villages remain the old and helpless Indians who are destined to disappear completely in a not far away future.

PAGE PHELPS

A Purpose

NOTHING is.
You wander and stretch,
You crouch and cry.
You have a message?
Then let it be!

Abstraction

I
Am going to be ab
stract
too.
It's easy
with words
romantic
and phrases
pedantic.
The poet baffles
our
lesser minds.
Why can't I?
The problem
is
is there
anything at all
Behind all
That abstruse
ness or
is it
musings
of a mind
like mine
just
putting things
in odd
pla
ces like
this?



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A Visit To An Indian Village

The village of Huancayo appeared to our tired eyes by surprise in the middle of a vast and colorful plateau, and it seemed to us like the easel of a painter after an arduous day's work. We could see spots of vivid colors—the deep green of the alfalfa, harvested three and often more times a year, the flashy red of the bougainvillea and carnations, the yellow of the sunflowers, the dark brown of the mountains surrounding the village, whose snow-crowned summits made a great and unforgettable contrast with the blue of the sky.

The first houses that we saw were small, one-roomed houses, made of mud and straw with large open places in two sides of the building which served as windows to let the warmth and light from the sun enter. There were little yards behind these houses where the animals were kept.

Even though it was early in the morning, the street was full of life and movement. Caravans of llamas were streaming down into the town, laden with produce for sale.

Big and small, short and tall Indians, men, women and children were coming to the fair. Some by foot, others on little carriages pulled by donkeys or old horses. All of them had the same dark face, the face of the Indian. They were strange, sad faces that revealed the suffering of centuries and the indifference to pain. They were faces which told a long and terrible story. They had an expression hard to understand because it reflected all the past of their race, all the abuse that they have endured, the hunger of the past and the present. It seemed that they did not know how to laugh, and in their eyes they had an expression of vagueness as if they did not care about life or death. They were coming, with a monotonous walk like automatons.

As we were getting closer to the center of the town, the houses changed in appearance and we could see, on our way to the square, two-story brick and cement houses, small stores and some scattered restaurants.

The village, like any other Indian village, centers around the "Plaza." Dominating the square was the Church, built chiefly of uniformly cut brown stones, its interior richly decorated with intricate carvings and paintings, and with two enormous fountains for holy water at the entrance. Across from the Church was the House of the Governor, beside which was the Police Station. On the right side of the Church, and occupying a vast expanse, was the market famous for its traditional Sunday fair. It was not a particularly good market, it was not even paved, but it had a great significance in the life of the village.

Leading out from this square were the four main streets of the village, paved of stone, going either up or down. Running parallel to them were the sidewalks almost one yard above the level of the street. Flower beds and promenades lined with stone benches surrounded the small fountain in the center of the square.

We could feel the excitement of the atmosphere that prevailed over the village every Sunday. Slowly, the Indians from neighboring villages and their majors—as they call their chiefs—dressed in very bright colored costumes ascended the streets to assemble in the square. The men were wearing shirt-like tunics, slit-neck ponchos to which were added a small blanket, a sort of little purse for carrying coca leaves, and a knitted cap. Over their long tunics the women wore a shawl, a woven belt wound many times around the waist and a graceful hat made of white straw. On their feet they wore sandals of cloth, straw or leather.

After a while the streets and the market floors were lined with white awnings, and under them, neatly displayed, were their articles: soft woolen rugs of every conceivable color, fluffy slippers made of llama skin, hand decorated skirts, baskets of every size, woolen articles made from llama, alpaca and sheep, pottery of different sizes and colors, silver charms and masks, and of course, vegetables, fruits and flowers of every description.

About noon, the square and market were so crowded that it was impossible to walk. Children, llamas, dogs, flies, all intermingled. The noise, the screams, and the sound of the church bells, together with the smell of the food and of the fermented corn made the atmosphere almost unbearable. Yet it contained the flavour of Indian life in its full expression.

One of the most attractive aspects of the fair was the bargaining of goods which we went through when trying to buy a huge basket of colored straw.

All these things lasted until the beginning of the night when the merry-making followed the market transactions, with dancing and singing to the music of the "quena," the flute, drums, bells and whistles. We sat watching the dancers whirling and spinning around, following the strange and fascinating rhythm produced by their instruments. Men and women seemed to dance individually, completely apart one from the other. They danced mechanically, showing no emotion, incredibly lonely. This went on and on. They showed no sign of exhaustion. At little intervals, they would stop and drink some of their liqueur and continue the dance again with renewed strength.

Probably this lasted all night; that, I can only presume. We went away the next morning and going through the square we saw the market—this time deserted,—with the exception of a dog eating a piece of dry meat and two Indians sleeping in the middle of a pile of dirty papers.

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IN this world of conformity and uniformity,
Psychologists say that the search for normality and
the happy average
Is the key to success.

But someone forgot to tell the ad men
Who sit in their similar offices on Madison Street
And think the same thoughts about selling.

What they produce to sell merchandise to
Thousands of happy conforming Americans
Is the idea of the unaverage, abnormal tenth of
society who enjoy their products
At a rather abnormal price,

Insinuating of course that everyone is
Normal and average to begin with
But wants, in his average little heart, to be the
One the rest of the happy idiots conform to.



The Chart



Scrunched over his desk, David figured. He got up for more scratch paper and figured some more

"Nine times three," thought he, "three times three times three? No, it must be nine and two times nine." He looked back at the two tables already before him on his chart. He counted on his fingers, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven, and wrote in large numbers in the proper column.

"Now, nine times four." Again he counted—and again and again.

Then he stood in line, waiting his turn, and took the chart from his workbook. "I'll make another neater one tonight. Maybe I'll type it, but it'll be hard to get the columns even," he thought.

"Let's see, David."

He opened his workbook and lay the problems on the desk.

"Hmm-m. No, number four is wrong. Seven times six is forty-two, not thirty-three."

He glanced at his chart. Yes, there it was, forty-two. Well, he wouldn't be making that mistake again. Not with this chart.

"What's that you have there, David?"

He put it before her, smiling. "See, it's a chart. You look on this column and then you look on that one there and over and down, and it tells what the answer is. I figured it out during arithmetic this morning, and now all I need is this chart and I'll never be wrong. I'll show you how it works. Say you want to multiply—"

"Yes, I see. You can't use it, David. We want you to memorize the multiplication tables, not use a chart. You go back to your seat and learn the six tables and then come back and I'll ask you. I'll keep the chart."

He stared at her—and turned away.

Later that night, his father entered David's room.

"Hi, Son, What are you making?"

"Nothing."

"Why it looks like a bridge, and there's the suspending ropes and the girders."

"It's nothing." He clamped two of the metal bars of his erector set together and broke the string.

"David! Why did you do that?"

Eine Einbildung

ICH bin wie eine Fensterscheibe,
Zerbrechlich und ganz klar;
Du siehst mich nie, aber durchmich
Die Ferne ist wunderbar.

Du siehst nur die Regenflecken
Grau aus das Seelenhaus—
Zerbrich du mich, und komme
Hinaus!

Nature Morte

Une carafe et deux verres d'eau.
Deux assiettes et deux cuillères,
Deux fourchettes et deux couteaux,
Un télégramme daté d'hier,
Un sofa bien confortable
Et personne dessus pour en profiter,
Deux chaises placées devant la table
Mais il n'est pas venu dîner.
Une pendule qui tictaque,
Une phono qui grésille,
Une peinture signée Braque
Qui représente une fille,
Du champagne qui fretille
Mais personne ne le boit,
Deux chandelles qui vacillent
Qui n'éclairent que moi,
Des fruits, du raisin noir,
Des pêches, des amandes, des noix
Mais une seule grosse Poire:
Moi.



The English Assignment

*For what are they all in their high conceit
When Man in the bush with God they meet.*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

BILLY got so far as to put his hand on the doorknob, before his mother caught him.

"Where are you going?"

"I just thought I'd go out and play in the woods some."

"Have you done your homework?"

"Not quite all of it. There's some English . . ."

"Go do it. We can't afford to tutor you in English, too."

He sighed and went slowly upstairs, shut the door to his room and lay, stomach down, on his bed, with the open book before him on the pillow.

He turned to William Cullen Bryant. "Here goes another dumb description of flowers," he thought.

INSCRIPTION FOR THE ENTRANCE TO A WOOD

Stranger, if thou hast learned a truth which needs

No school of long experience, that the world

Is full of guilt and misery, and hast seen

Enough of all its sorrows, crimes, and cares,

To tire thee of it, enter this wild wood

And view the haunts of nature . . .

The first question to be answered was, "In line five, what does 'it' refer to?"

"The wood," Billy thought quickly. "'It' refers to the wood." He knew that did not make sense, but he wrote it anyway and read on.

. . . God hath yoked to guilt

Her pale tormentor, misery . . .

"In line fourteen, what is the figure of speech?" He knew that, personification.

He heard the other boys playing in one of the few wild wooded areas left in the neighborhood. One came up to ask his mother where he was, and

he heard his mother say, "I'm sorry, Billy can't come out today." They were playing Indians. Billy pictured how they would race through the trees and pretend to capture imaginary enemies and kill imaginary game, and the squirrels would chatter and scamper through the leaves in fright. He remembered the time he fell in the stream while trying to leap to a tree root that was slippery. He remembered—

He turned back to the book with dull hate. "In line thirty, what is a 'causey'?"

"Line thirty, line thirty," he thought. He skipped to:

. . . The massy rocks themselves,

And the old and ponderous trunks of prostrate trees

That lead from knoll to knoll a causey rude . . .

The dictionary was downstairs so he took a guess and wrote "a crude cause."

"This is a awfully dull poem," he thought. "How could anyone really like this stuff? It is so girlish for a man to write about flowers and things."

He answered the other questions quickly and came to the last, "What is the theme of this poem?" Billy scrawled, "the theme is to describe a forest." He was not sure if that was a theme or not—he was not too sure what a theme was, he had been looking out the window, as usual, the day it had been explained.

He was through and flipped the book on the floor.

Billy raced downstairs, two by two, and ran outside, towards the woods. But it was growing dark and everyone had gone!

He went for a walk in the dusk, the cool air clearing his mind. He saw some blue jays and squirrels and *scuffed* the fallen leaves. "Each is like a separate painting," he thought. Then he passed the grave of a cat he had buried. "I 'pose I'll have to wait until I'm dead and buried before I can be out here," he thought, bitterly remembering the wasted afternoon.

Then he walked slowly home.

—Stranger, if thou hast learned a truth which needs No school of long experience . . .

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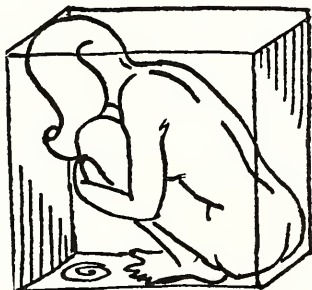
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ALWAYS YOUNG

I SHALL always be young—
Not youthful and lighthearted and graceful,
But painfully young and awkward:
Standing up and discovering that
Everything in the room has shrunk
And I alone am large and gawky,
Tripping over the edges of the rug,
Growing too fast to be used to each inch
Before the next was added.

Hopelessly hating it,
I shall always be young.



SONJA P. KARSEN
Assistant Professor of
Modern Languages

Faith — Translation of Jamie Torres Bodet

As the turbulent sound of the ocean
resounds in the silent shell,
so infinity has become a prisoner
in this solitude that enchains me. . .

I plowed the sea, I built on sand,
I wrote in water, I sowed in granite,
and looking back on what I have achieved and written
my liberty was my doom.

What I wanted I did not achieve,
and what I am, I do not know whether I desired it
because without direction I move toward a goal
That knows neither present nor past. . .
I do not blame you faith, you did not deceive me:
I thought you constant—and found you fickle!

Fe

Como en el mudo caracol resuena
 del océano azul el sordo grito,
 así ha quedado preso el infinito
 en esta soledad que me encadena . . .
 Aré en el mar, edificué en la arena,
 en el agua escribí, sembré en granito
 y, a través de lo hecho y de lo escrito,
 mi propia libertad fué mi condena.
 De cuanto pretendí, nada he logrado
 y cuanto soy no sé si lo he querido
 pues sin oriente voy hacia esa meta
 que no tiene presente ni pasado . . .
 Y no te culpo, fe, no me has mentado:
 brújula te creí — y eras veleta!

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SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE, SWEET BRIAR VIRGINIA
VOLUME 35, No. 1

OCTOBER, 1957

THE
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SWEET BRIAR, VIRGINIA

OCTOBER, 1957

The Brambler

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The Brambler

SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE, SWEET BRIAR, VIRGINIA

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AN APOLOGY TO GOD

THIS is National God Week:
I shall write a poem describing God,

Who appeared on campus one
Perfectly normal day and said
(In a casual voice, as if speaking
Of boys or food or diets or tests
Or new clothes or letters-from-home):
"You all, I'm God." We looked again and
There Was God,

Travelling incognito, hiding behind
A pony tail and an unwieldy stack of books;
But we recognized Him. Some of us
Doubted, said: "God—if you are God—
Grant us just one long-hoped-for wish."
God smiled and answered: "I am a
Selfish God; some things must be
Reserved only for God" which seemed justified
When we thought about it;
Our faith was reassured

So that we can accept, most emphatically,
God's existence, especially now
In National God Week.

Grass

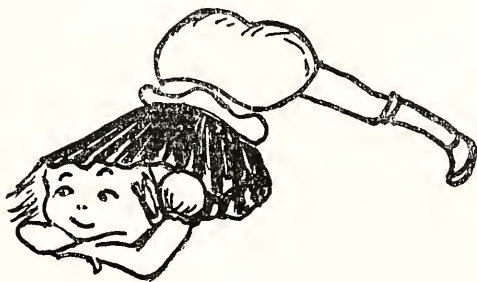
E LOISE, Kay Thompson's Eloise, says, "Here's what I like: Grass." Well, this is more or less grass: it's what I like (some of the what) and it's certainly green.

I like liver and bacon (and I like to eat them by themselves without the tomatoes and onions getting in the way); W. H. Auden's "Christmas Oratorio," and the fact we are giving it here on December 13th and 14th; the arcades—especially when it rains—and conversations that I cannot leave, not for Faulkner, Eliot and Auden put together.

I like a friend of mine's mother who bakes geese with herbs she grows under rocks and wraps her Christmas presents in tan paper and then paints them. I like people who make mistakes—not just little ones either—and plunge on earnestly making more. I like capitalism because we can gripe about materialism and all the exploited, subjugated and mechanized people in the United States and yet appreciate the do-your-own-brand of exploitation and subjugation. I like college and idealistic, impractical but able-to-laugh-at themselves people. And I like Marlboro cigarettes and coffee for breakfast.

This could go on but I'm bored with it. Besides, Rupert Brooke ist all right; but my name is not Rupert Brooke. One thing more: I like this year's Student Government.

(This is an unpaid political advertisement.)



Polyphonic

THE kites can not fly
Because of that barrier of trees.
The telephone poles are too high,
Too inextricably linked.

*There are voices in the wire . . .
swift metallic voices . . .
in the wire . . .
tangled in the wire . . .*

They are dangerous to
Tissue and bent balsam,
To cotton cloth
And crayon pattern.

*. . . voices in the wire,
no-bodied voices,
men speaking, and women,
across the county,
across the nation,
nations speaking too . . .*

The difficulty is
That there isn't enough room,
Too many trees, too many houses.
The trouble is . . . No it isn't.

*. . . too many voices,
the voices of nobodies,
the voices of Anybody There . . .*

Well if you're so smart
Go another way.
I can't.
Why not?

*... so I says to her,
Mabel, I says, I just
can't swing it this year.
You know how things are ...*

The wind is from the south-east.

In the other direction
The field is barren, rough for walking,
Eroded with the leavings
Of a flooded harvest.

*... not even a harvest, really,
the crop never got that far.
Dammit Charlie, I don't know
what I'm going to do ...*

If we could get a
good running start
From the top of the hill,
Maybe then ...

*... Senator, run this campaign
from Washington to Idaho and
you'll be picking them up like dazies,
I tell you ...*

We could still do it
If we could
Get high enough
Quickly enough.

*... all relations with foreign
embassies are to be suspended, and
everything possible must be done,
to speed up the armament race before ...*

More tail,
It needs more tail.
(Now we will surely
Do it.)

*... We've got to have that oxygen,
Can't you send a portable unit?
There's still a chance
we can ...*

But the wind is from the south-east.

Turn to the field then Walk
Eagerly in the rythm of the field.
Catch the ruts hard, quickly.
Step faster where the breeze is up.

*... Well maybe I will, I says ...
... Of course I could always sell ...
... You know, once the unions are
behind you ...
... Treaty negotiations are pending ...
... we'll be ready at Emergency ...*

Now — Now — Now.
Lift you're knees high.
Pull on the string
Until it tautens.

*... so I shells out the ten bucks ...
... though I already made the down
payment on a new tractor ...
... course we've taking an awful gamble
on the party machine ...
... prepare for immediate invasion ...
... take the short cut, there's a
detour ...*

Your fingers and palms bleed
But only a little.
Success is no near.
There. We've nearly done it.

*... so everythings ok for awhile ...
... prices are up now too, and labors
cheap enough ...
... How can we lose with Fraizer
backing us? ...
... all resistance on the borders has
been surpressed ...
... just hurry. Hurry ...*

Be careful. Be Careful.
Pull the string cautiously.
Don't get it twisted.
(The sun is in my eyes.)

*... but I'm still suspicious of her, see
... if the bank will just ...
... Who said he won't? ...
... do not listen to enemy propaganda...
... can't you hear me? The static ...*

The wind is strong from the south-east.

Oh look out.
Don't break it.
Stumble bum.
Now see what you've done.

*... so I goes down to her place
and she's gone ...
... I don't know, I just don't know ...
... Why that dirty crooked politition ...
... Wait a minute here's a bulletin ...
... No, not that way, the detour ...*

I didn't do it.
You did.
I didn't, and anyway
i couldn't help it.

*... Well, how's I to know she'd ...
... If the government would subsidize ...
... He can't do that to us ...
... enemy surprize attack has wiped out ...
... operator, operator ...*

Well, anyway
Lets try it again.
Maybe this time ...
Yes, maybe ...

*... next time she ...
... another year the harvest should be
... Hell, we don't need him ...
... forces are rallying and the counter
attack ...
... yes, yes, hurry ...*

But the kite has a tear in it.
Tomorrow then.
Things will be different Tomorrow.
We'll get a new kite.

*... oh well, easy come, easy go ...
... I thought I'd open up the
south forty ...
... so we'll change our platform ...
... Land forced must become mobil
immediately ...
... Hurry ...*

Maybe the wind will change.



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RETURN TO THE ISLAND

I SPENT each year when I was in high school waiting for the few weeks each summer when I went to an island on a lake in Northern Canada.

Everything about those weeks — the rugged Canadians who spoke brisk, clipped English when they did not speak French; the lake, so clear that the bottom of it was visible twelve feet below the surface and so isolated that it was a rare day when more than three boats were on it at a time; my aunt and uncle; and their three sons who spoiled me like a younger sister — seemed perfect to me.

The summer after my first year in college my aunt, three cousins, my oldest cousin's wife and I left for Canada at midnight.

I slept during most of the trip and was asleep while we traveled the tortuous road on which I usually gritted my teeth and mentally checked off the landmarks that meant we were getting near the lake. I was surprised when we reached the fishing lodge which is our last contact with civilization, and a little disappointed, because I had not anticipated it.

The second day we were there I, half-lying to my cousin's wife that there were not enough blueberries to warrant two pickers, took a bucket and started toward the point of the island.

The berries were not plentiful, and I was nearly at the end of the point before my bucket was half full. I sat down on a rock and leaned back against a moss-covered log.

I had sat daydreaming in almost the same place last year, when I thought I was in love with a boy who worked at the fishing lodge. I had sat there unseen and watched him as he rowed across the lake.

Year before last I had knelt there picking blueberries violently and biting my tongue to keep from crying because my cousins had not taken me hiking with them. I had fished, swum and hiked with them before like another boy, and I was hurt when they said they were going on a men's trip.

I often came to that spot alone to capture each part of the island and lake in my mind to save for the winter.

My daydreams there about coming to my own island led me to make secret promises to myself which I sealed in charms and kept under my pillow as if some magic would make them come true.

That day I wanted to recapture the serenity and unreserved happiness that I always felt when I was at the island. The lake reflected the vivid blue of the sky, and a brisk breeze rustled the branches of the fir trees on the island and brushed up ripples on the lake which lapped gently at the rocks along the shore.

I tried to keep my mind from constricting to petty worries, but I could not stop thinking that I wanted to bring back enough berries for a pie; that my shoes were wet and uncomfortable; that pieces of moss had fallen down my collar and were tickling my back.

Restlessly I picked up the bucket, stood up and started back toward the cottage. My foot caught under a rock and I stumbled, spilling the berries. Tears of frustration filled my eyes.

"Oh," I prayed, "Don't let me get old! I don't want to grow up!"

A HERESY

WE are the godists:
Everything matters.
The detailed minutia of
The various theologies
Are our text
And our personal souls
Our long-range goal.
Not "excelsior" but a
Question mark is our
High-held banner;
Our serious intentness
Leaves room for little else.
But someday, quite by
Accident, we may realize
That God is, or isn't,
And the fine points of our quest
Affect neither Him
Nor us.

TO BE

GIVE me time. Just give me more time, and I shall learn how to Live, I shall stretch my awareness as taut as the head of a drum so that everything which touches me will boom. I have a faith which does not concern itself with beliefs. My faith means allowing myself, making myself, or teaching myself to Live; and Living is the only thing I need time for. A contented existence is nothing, and apart from Life—it is not very difficult and takes no time, and so there is always plenty of time for it.

Living takes practice. It is an acquired skill achieved to any marked extent only by the mature. I ask for time because I am young enough to believe that I have reached the depth of my capacity, that in youth is the highest sensitivity—to romantic landscapes, high-flown philosophies, and the "pangs of dispriz'd love." The depth of capacity does not exist, but I, having grown up instead of down, have known no greater awareness. I fear, in my youth, that the future may not come; but the future always comes for those who strive to live in time, and there are only two kinds of people who do not: the contented and the dead.

I am in a hurry to live, and that is why I need time. Time is milk to the young. My hurry will cease along with importunate thirst for time when I have acquired the ability to Live. Time will by then have become a real part of the materials I use in Living, a medium in which to crystallize my selfish or sensual or aesthetic desires, inseparable part of my total unique being. I will realize that it actually is, and is not only to be; I will discover and attempt to fulfill the possibility of integrating all of time, past, present, and future, my own present. This is maturity.

Maturity is always a partial condition, like love, and interest, and art. Maturity is fullness of individual Life which is implicitly incomplete because it is progressive, while perfection stands still. Each total being in maturity accumulates and assimilates time of the past and of the present, building itself organically into the future. Time and individual being are the inseparable components of human life—separate them and you have nothing, non-being; throw them away together and you have Infinity. For they are significant only in a temporal sense. At the end of each individual life they cease to exist as entities, and fall like drops of rain into a universal sea.



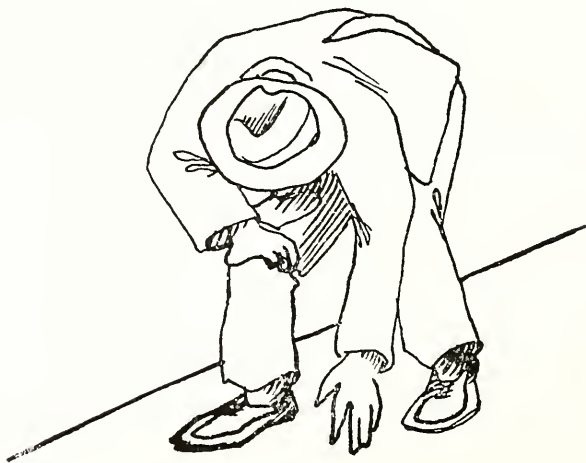
Reflection

I WATCHED a happy child
Draw pictures in the sand.
Smiling, full of huge ideas,
He toiled in delight, until they
Called.

While the artist napped with
Dreams of afternoon creation,
A restless sea threw its
Weight upon the shore and
Snatched the masterpieces.

INCIDENT

OLD man, dropping your new cigar
At your feet as you scrutinize your change
Where are you going?
I see you stoop to pick it up
On the pavement outside the drugstore.
Why should you stop to pick up the cigar
Little gray old man?
Why do you mumble over your change
As you totter on thin legs?
In your dark, old-fashioned, serviceable suit,
And antique hat with a grosgrain band,
In your slightly curling collar,
And your slightly rumpled tie,
What are you thinking about old man?
Where are you going?



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DECEMBER, 1957

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SWEET BRIAR, VIRGINIA

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The Brambler

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Contributions may be submitted to the Editor at any time. They should be typed and must be signed. All manuscripts, whether or not they are accepted for publication, will be returned, with critical remarks at the writer's request, after the appearance of the issue for which they were submitted.

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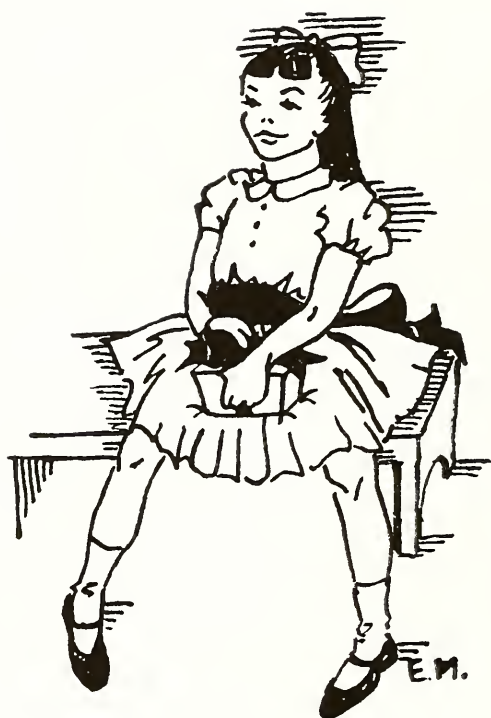
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The Angel

THIS STORY is not true; it is not even plausible. All museums require all children to be accompanied by an adult, there are signs everywhere saying this; and there is no such angel in the museum I describe—the very clever will recognize the museum as the “M_____ Museum.” It is a fact that children do not realize Christmas is commercial—they love Santa and Rudolph. Adults do not realize that Christmas is commercial either, except perhaps when they are shopping at “M____’s.” The true concept of Christmas is too difficult for children to grasp—adults cannot even grasp it. The idea is ridiculous that somewhere there is some one, especially a child, who can see the Angel of Christmas . . .

Hurried by the wind at her back, Ana ran up the steps of the Museum. She had come from Betty Reed’s Christmas party and she was wearing her “good” coat and a ribbon encrusted with bells and sparkles hung down the length of her pony tail. She jangled up the steps, remembering that it was easy, when running, to misjudge distance and come flatly down on the same step or trip on to the next one. As she reached the storm doors, Ana wondered what her mother would say if she knew she had not come directly home from the party. But she would never know, Ana decided as she walked past the electric-eye, if she told her that she had had such a good time that she was the last guest to leave. It was not true; she did not have a good time and she was one of the first to leave, but her mother would never know. Satisfied, she smiled at the guard and unbuttoned the top button of her coat. She did not stop to look at the knights who rode their stuffed, armored horses in the Main Hall as if it were a tournament field; she did not take her usual detour to peer at Egyptian mummy-cases. She walked up the center flight of stairs, through several rooms of Renaissance painting, and stopped in a tiny room with a marble bench in the center.

She was glad no one was in the room; not that people were often there, but sometimes someone would sit on the bench to rest. Two days ago, Ana found two women sitting there. She would not have minded squeezing next to them on the bench if they had not been talking so loudly or if they at least had been looking at the Angel. Their perfume was heavy and there was a lot of it; the two different brands cancelled the sweetness that might have been and left only a cloying odor. Ana hoped the Angel would not smell it, for Ana knew the Angel would not like it. There was no one on the bench now; there was no one in the room. Ana sat down; she felt the marble-coolness of the bench on the backs of her knees as she

arranged her skirt. She folded her hands, and slowly, as if she were about to eat the favorite part of her favorite dessert or about to go through a religious ritual of some kind, she looked up at the Angel.

Ana could not remember if the first time she had seen the Angel was when she was with her mother on some Sunday afternoon or with her class when they toured the Museum. She had not paid much attention to the Angel until a month ago; before then, she had been rather fond of a huge painting of horses galloping, as it seemed to her, almost across the wall. If she looked up at the painting just the right way, she could almost imagine the feeling in her nostrils of the dust they raised. The Angel was not as big as these horses, she was painted below the Virgin and the Infant Jesus, as part of an altar-piece. The Angel did not look at home in the Museum as the horses did, and Ana thought she would be happier in a dim place that smelled of dampness than in the cool white marble room that smelled of nothing. She was not like the curly-haired, rosy-cheeked angels in department store windows. She had not the face of a little girl, but the face of a woman; she was not wearing a white robe, but one painted in patterns of all colors and in gilt. The Angel was like a tiny, precious piece of stained glass.

Ana looked and looked at her, and somehow she felt very much better. Ana did not know why she had felt so badly. She had just come from Betty Reed's Christmas party, and Mrs. Reed had hired a Santa Claus from L_____ & T_____, and L_____ & T_____ had pretty good Santas, in fact when Ana's mother took her to see Santa, Ana always asked to see the one at L_____ & T_____. At the party everyone got a present, everyone had ice-cream in the shape of Christmas trees, and everyone sang Christmas songs, mostly "Jingle Bells" and "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer" because everyone knew these the best. But still Ana thought something was missing; she did not know what, but she knew at the party that if she came to see the Angel, she would find that elusive something and everything would be all right. And everything was all right now. The Angel was so beautiful and so shining to Ana that she thought the Christ Child was very lucky to have her with Him forever. Ana wished she could always have the Angel with her, so she could look at her if she was disappointed or unhappy. Somehow the Angel would always be able to make her feel better. It was almost time to go. Ana could not be late to supper, Ana could stay just a little while longer. It would be Christmas in two days; she wanted to give the Angel something so she would not think Ana had forgotten. She untied her ribbon, her hair fell loose—it was a very pretty ribbon, almost as bright and sparkling as the Angel's dress. Ana got up,, laid it on the floor under the altar piece, and stood looking at the Angel, humming a carol . . .



Caprice

DID YOU think, perchance,
that I
Had fallen down a hole
nearby?
I am much too keen and witty,
So I lurk about the city

And the country, alternately.
Reeling, drunken with
the sordid air
Inhaled in passing down
a teeming thoroughfare,
I twine around a lamp post—
stiff and melancholy there.

Later on,
when breath of dawn
Revives the limpid spirit, I
seek refuge in a wood nearby,
As surreptitiously you pass.

Could it be Me
that you see
Grinning from the—
clinging to the
Bough of a catalpa tree,
like the Cheshire Cat of fable?
Don't you think that I am able
to disappear and reappear
As skillfully as he?

I the sprite
who swings in glee
From rope to rope,
to play the bells in the church tower,
Summoning in the holy hour
of an early Sunday Spring.

I a stray pink sunbeam
 lingering
To dye one cloud
 a glowing
Sunset-sight of streaks and bars,
 to protest the coming
Night of gloomy shades
 and nosy, Peeping-Toms of stars.

I the elusive gust of wind
 that shakes the leaves
 until they snap,
 and fall
Onto the frozen ground,
 and in my hair,
 and on your lap.

I snatch the hats from girls
 and boys.
I make an eerie, screaming noise,
 the blustering, howling,
Lonesome voice of me,
 as I wander endlessly.

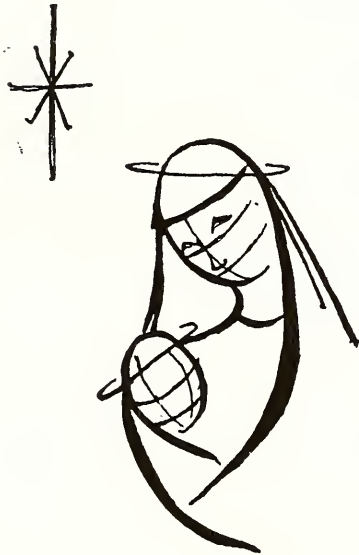
When it grows a little
 colder,
I, who now of course
 am older,
Descend, wraith-like, in particles
 of smog
Amid the overwhelming
 fog.

Then, when it is
 colder still,
I leap from some
 convenient hill
In vain attempt
 to fly.
I would be high now,
 but for my weight,
Which pulls me down
 upon the town—
Flake by everlasting flake!

Render Unto Caesar

SHEPHERDS tendered lambs, fruit,
and a manger in which to lie.

Magi rendered gold for the King,
Frankincense for the Deity;
Myrrh for the Man
condemned to die.



The Wreath of Deodars

MY HANDS plunge up to the wrists in vines
To pluck the wooden roses of the Deodars.

Twisting them with wire and cardboard backing
To make a wreath for Christmas,
I also make the circle of the unicorn,
The cup of Socrates, the collar of Siegfried's hound,
And the eyes of the cat who looked at the king.

Polished and nailed on the front door
By the silk sleigh-embroidered ribbon
That passes from Christmas to Christmas
(Shorter with each than it was before),
The wreath hangs solidly on the open door,

Open so that others can see
The roses, and the pinecones, and the barberry,

They smell the pine, the sweet sap,
And the potatoes in the kitchen.
They remember the now,
That there are still the spoons to be set out, and
That another chair must be brought in from the sewing room.

I remember the before.
The antique sand he kept in the glass ascends the hour.
And if for a moment I am quiet when others are gay and
Boistrously hanging other wreaths around the room,
It could be because

I know why the wreath was made,
And for whom.

Mrs. McYoung

MRS. FLYNN who lived in the peeling white bungalow on Rockaway Avenue thought she was a good Catholic.

So did Mrs. Grazziani who lived in the grey shingled house with the multicolored walk and the shimmering glass ball on a sandstone pedestal in the front yard.

But Mrs. McYoung who lived between them in the house with the overgrown hedge, knew she was the best Catholic in the whole Holy Family Parish.

She lit candles before the pink cheeked, electric blue mantled Immaculate Conception for all her dear dead in the Canarsie Cemetery and for those who lay in the earth of County Cork.

During thunderstorms, she put on galoshes and sprinkled holy water behind her sofa and over radiators

So that the Lord might spare her home from the terrible blows of light which caused even the bells in the black metal telephone box to ring hysterically.

The boy, the Virgin's late and only gift to her long marriage, followed behind shuffling through the ritual in his tiny, redrubber boots, hurrying through "Hail Mary's" before the next thunder clap interrupted him and he had to be urged to continue by his mother's loud, shrill chant.

Mrs. McYoung, not only the best Catholic on the block, but of the whole parish, did not allow Mr. McYoung to drink in the house.

She did not allow him to smoke his pipe upstairs.

He moved the old, flower printed easy chair which he and Mrs. McYoung bought when they were first married, down the cellar.

When he was home, he spent all his time sitting in it and smoking, coming upstairs for meals, and then, returning to watch the red glowing inside of the furnace.

No one ever came down the unsteady, wooden cellar steps to visit him: the child did not like the cold, cement gloom or the cold dust smell, and Mrs. McYoung was too busy saying her rosary.

Then Mr. McYoung did not come home until Mrs. McYoung was snoring, her son snuggled next to her in the big double bed, under the picture of a purple bleeding heart pierced by a dagger.

Mrs. McYoung did not seem to miss Mr. McYoung.

She followed her morning pattern of mass and during the novenas, rushed through the "Our Father's" to be able to repeat it more times and faster than anyone else in the Holy Family Parish.

Then, Mr. McYoung came home only on weekends, to see his son.

Mrs. McYoung heard that Mr. McYoung was living with a woman he had met in the Avenue J Bar.

Mrs. McYoung prayed to the Assumption, the Immaculate Conception, the Virgin of Sorrows, but Mr. McYoung continued to live with the woman whom no one ever saw in the Holy Family Church.

It was rumored that she wasn't even Catholic.

Mrs. McYoung forbid Mr. McYoung to enter her house.

For a long time she clutched her son to her, prayed, felt sorry for herself, and finally committed suicide.

The family said she died of a sudden heart attack, poor woman.

But if pain had stabbed an instant death, she couldn't have written the long letter to her son, asking him to pray for her soul,

And another letter to her sister, asking her to take care of her boy and not allow him to live with his father and that woman.

All the neighbors came to Mrs. McYoung's wake.

Mrs. Flynn said Mrs. McYoung was the best Catholic she had ever known, and wasn't it a shame her husband drove her to her death.

Mrs. Grazziani agreed and said look at all the beautiful flowers and didn't the funeral parlor do a good job on Mrs. McYoung?

She was buried in consecrated ground.

And every Sunday, her son lit the wick of the yellow wax in a burgundy colored glass in his aunt's parish church.

And Mr. McYoung married the woman he met in the Avenue J Bar.



QUESTION

DEATH works with a lead hammer
Under a lead sky.
Firing the forge of fall, he strikes,
And the trees die.

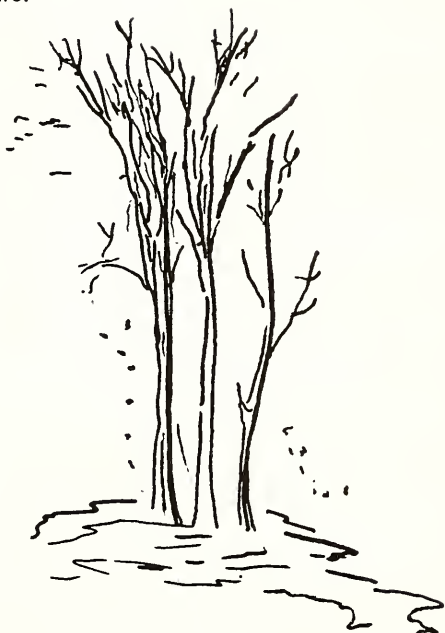
Seared leaves sawdust the ground
With a dead brown stain,
Absorbing the sound of the hammer's stroke
And the dying rain.

Death strips his victims. He looks
At the skeletons, gaunt and bare.
Then he breathes a funereal sigh
And leaves them there.

I am only Death's apprentice
Learning the master's skills,
But why does Death refuse to bury
The dead he kills?

He knows and I know
That bare, unburied bone
Lingers on as a loom for Life
When Death is gone.

Life weaves, and a new pattern
Through the woods is made.
The dead trees live again:
Is Death afraid?





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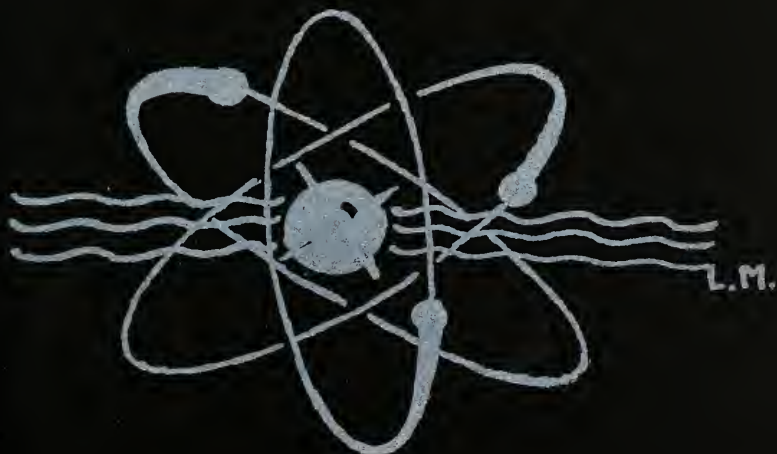
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SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM ISSUE

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Contributions may be submitted to the Editor at any time. They should be typed and must be signed. All manuscripts, whether or not they are accepted for publication, will be returned, with critical remarks at the writer's request, after the appearance of the issue for which they were submitted.

A Big Wind

TIME blew over the world,
a rushing turbulency of wind
which whistled through the hollows,
hurled the hidden out of existence,
and flattened matter into the crevices
of the lush, insatiable worm.

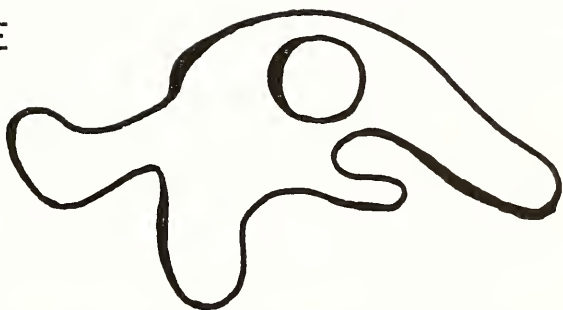
Upon a hill
 it paused
 was nearly snared
 by polished marble—
but slender fluted columns could not hold
the brash visitor—it blew them all to dust
and brawled onward, flying high in colors,

Dashing out a major asteroid,
whipping seas until they stood in peaks,
slicing furrows in the face of earth,
incidentally twirling tops of dream,
 as it passed,
flipping through the pages of a book—
it levelled all, and built out of the matter
 of its levelling.

It now must wheel
among these piers of fluted steel,
through tight-meshed snares
of analyzing synthesizing intellect, that dares
try to hold it down
onto the aspiring ground.

Time will be required once more to pause—
then—Look! There! above metallic chaos,
 above the monstrous shadows,
there gleams the gold trail of its onward thrust
above us, in the sunset of our day.

THE SPACE-TIME CAPSULE OF AN ENGLISH MAJOR



LIKE Auden's Adam, being "free to choose," I chose religion, science, and the rest, modern languages and antique tongues, music, art, and the economies of nations, the 'ologys of Soci, Bio, Psycho, Phis', and Anthropol, all translated, cropped, and crammed into a monstrous capsule labeled in the catalog as English Major. Here in the writings of the best minds of every age I can find the facts of the historian without losing the fantasy of the fabulist.

The Age of Beowulf and the Beginnings are as familiar to me as Aslan's Narnia or the land of Oz, or my own room with me in it, and the door closed. I am the Bear's Son and the Bee-wolf. Grendel's mother was my mother, and I sang at the feast of Bricriu in ancient Anglo-Saxon runes. Nothing that is fabled is myth to me, and nothing past history is new to me. I have chronicled Kings, Christs, Normans, Knights, and English bow-men with long bow, and I know the why of wars with roses.

I have understood the complex scientific formulas of Einstein, Curie, and Dr. Jekyll, transformed from the wooly-muffle of a text-book to the essay of a poet. The House of Usher falls with a crash. Doctor Faustus "goes down for a moral." Kafka and the galloping Hessian play ping-pong with their heads. But I can always escape to Saint Exupery, or to Lucretius and Atomic Materialism.

All that is hilarious I have to laugh at. I can smile back at the Cheshire cat, or go hunting the snark. And once Sartre and I both kicked Falstaff in the breeches.

My geography is printed on a rubber map, and I go easily with longen folk on pilgrimages. When the Queen of England is an allegory, when saints are murdered in cathedrals, I am there. The Nun's Priest knows me.

I have watched the phoenix and the turtle consume the ghosts of Hamlet with dead ashes, and I have wept for hollow men returned from wars. I have lost love's labor in Dantean rhyme when pandarus Galleot made Francesca weep and Dido wish to borrow Cleo's asp. But love regained in Tristram's time I found was sweeter for all that.

I also found that following the theory of the philosophy of the expanding universe, my capsule also expands at the rate of one iambic pentameter per canto, and its velocity is determined only by the speed at which I read or the facility with which I write.

I don't need glass menageries of test-tubes, or microscopic lenses, or slide rules, or court records to set Prometheus free in blank verse, or write a hymn to dead Hungarians, or a prothalamion on the marriage of the moon to gibbonous Sputnik. All I need I hold securely in the hummings of my space-time capsule.

An Ending

IT IS OVER,
But pain does not accompany
The knowing that never
Again can I reach into
The past, yours and mine,
And pretend that it is
The continuing Now.

Reason helps cut clean,
Shedding only a few tears
As it sharply amputates me
From our impermanent reality.
We are each the same:
Our surroundings have changed,
And our relationship.

There is no pain,
Only the warmth of sadness.

Science for Mankind

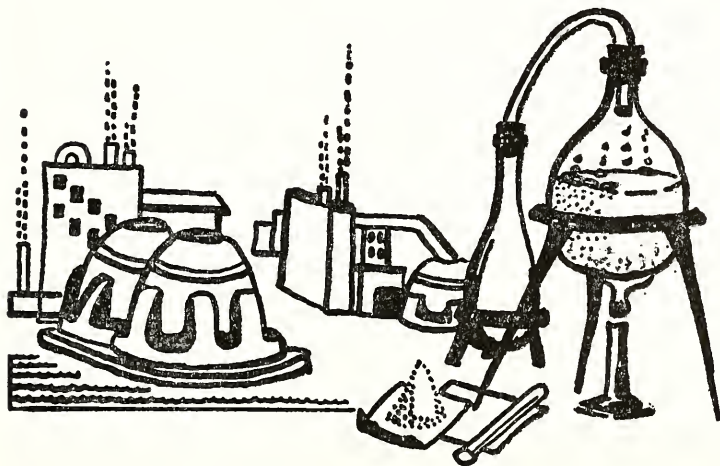
THEY used our sky for a sewer.
Pouring poison into air,
they hoped to maintain freedom.

Our cities are ruined, sacked,
and our earth is gutted.
All is decay.

Not with a "bang" or a "whimper,"
but with an ache
we rot to our ending.

The balance of power toppled,
and a polluted earth remains.
All is decay.

The fatal bulk which passed within the atmosphere
destroyed all.
Only the wind is left to contemplate its greatness.



SCIENCE DISCOVERS TWO-TAILED COMETS

GOD looked and laughed:
He saw scientists in
Immaculate white lab coats
Smiling smugly because they had,
After years of research, at last
Explained the comet's tail
In scientific terms that no one
Could dispute.

He looked, laughed,
And gave it an antenna.

Small Town

I DON'T know what woke me up that morning so early. It might have been the rocking of the train in the gravel bed or just the uneasiness that comes from sleeping in an unfamiliar place. Anyway the luminous dial on my watch showed it was six o'clock. I rolled over and let up the shade in my roomette. The day had already started and I could see the fences and fields of farm country. Everything was so familiar that I could almost smell the coldness of the air and earth. A small town flashed by my window. What a wonderful place to live. I once belonged to a small town. It had the same kind of wooden buildings, wide main street and a square at the end. That was when I was twelve and my Daddy worked for the Oregon Agriculture Department. The town was called Toppenish and the population was mostly Indian. I can remember Mamma always said it wasn't a "fit" place to raise a daughter but I thought it was great. Most of the people were friendly and if you stopped, they would talk with you about the weather or the crops.

My favorite friend was Russel Cooper. He owned the Toppenish Feed Store. He was short and seemed to be very old but now I think he was about fifty. He didn't have a wife but he did have a scraggy dog called Teapot. Mr. Cooper always said that one Teapot was better than ten wives. Everyone loved his cheerfulness. Everyday I used to hurry with my chores so I could go down to his store and help him work. The store smelled sweet from the bales of hay and sacks of mash. My job was to sweep the floors, measure the chicken meal and pull burrs out of Teapot's coat. The farmers would come into the store to buy and stay to talk about anything. In the fall when it began to get cold and the first snow had fallen, they would sit around and talk of the past hunting days and how the new season would match up to last year's. More and more often they complained about the city people who trespassed on their land, trampling the seeded fields and scaring the cattle.

"It's that darn new bill them Indians got passed," Mr. Cooper would say shaking his head. "These city fellars got 'umselfes a fancy gun and a 'spensive dog and come out here with 'ur license and duck stamp and Indian ticket and the rest of 'ur stuff and a'stead a just huntin on Indian land like they paid for to do, they hunt all over the darn place. They got no respect for nothin." Mr. Cooper was right. The city people didn't care whose land they were on. My Mamma used to say that a city man with a gun was bad. They were game hogs and careless and destructive. It was a big problem but when the farmers started this talk I knew the ducks were flying and it wouldn't be long before Mr. Cooper would get out his shotgun and say to me, "Kim, it's about time we took ourselves a walk down to Tyrell's and got us a license." Mr. Tyrell was the postmaster and he sold all the hunting licenses for duck shooting in Yakima County.

Mamma always had a fit when I went home and asked her to sign my permission blank. She would sit at the dinner table and plop the mash potatoes on each plate with disgust. "Katherine, you are just impossible." My Christian name is Katherine Mary but everyone calls me Kim except my mother. She was always getting mad about the silliest things like when Daddy bought me a shotgun and when I wanted to go hunting with Mr. Cooper. "Katherine you are just getting to be a tomboy. Why can't you like to cook and wear skirts and leave the pants and guns to the menfolk? A hunting license! Wasting good money, that's all your doing." Then she would threaten to send me to a convent but I knew she never meant that part. When things quieted down, I would help her with the dishes and she would finally give in.

The days would now be getting shorter and colder and the hunters filled the hotel. Every morning I would be up and dressed before dawn. I waited in the empty street for Mr. Cooper and Teapot. Then we would start off, sometimes towards Satus Creek and the old Goldendale road and sometimes towards the drain and the corn fields. That last morning we decided to hunt the drain and the corn fields. We walked down past the hotel and waved as usual to Mrs. Pendelton in the cafe. Her husband was the game warden for our county. Out we walked past the hop fields where ropes hung from the empty frames. That part of it was always pretty scary. The drain ran along the other side of the hop fields and was just a big irrigation ditch which controlled the water table. The water came mostly from underground springs and never froze. There were usually some ducks there because it was the only open water around. As we walked along the bank, Teapot dashed in and out of the scrubble, nose to the ground. Mr. Cooper watched the sky and then as the small, black spots began to appear, he would crouch down and in a low voice say, "Mark, mark." Teapot then came to heel and the three of us watched the familiar V formation slowly circle around. When they decided it was safe, they came lower and lower, preparing to land on the steamy water. Down, down they came and when they were in range, Mr. Cooper stood straight and shouted "Now!" and his gun went to his shoulder. Teapot was off to retrieve the ducks before they even started to fall. The remainder of the flight lifted back into the sky. This was always exciting. I never got tired of watching them fly or of smelling the mixture of gun powder, mist and wet dog. My aim wasn't too good but Mr. Cooper said that in time I would be perfect. He said that it didn't matter anyway because I was a careful hunter and that was what really counted. He had taught me how to carry my gun and how important it was to pretend that it was loaded at all times. He said that if I made one mistake, I might never get a chance to make another. I think he meant I would be dead.

We crossed the drain and walked down towards the corn field. Sometimes there were a few strays here. I cocked my gun and climbed over the fence. The drain cut through the lower part of the field by the road but it was easier to enter the field from this direction. I pushed the breech closed just as two mallards started up out of the fallen corn. I took aim, but I knew before the shells went off that the birds were out of range. Teapot took off after the birds, one had fallen but not from my shell. I turned to see if Mr. Cooper had shot but he was still busy getting over the fence. Part of the broken stalks still stood and it was hard to keep track of the dog. To the right of us, the field was flat. All the stalks had been cleared in preparation for planting. It was along this strip of ground that Teapot started back toward us. A corn husk was stuck to his back and

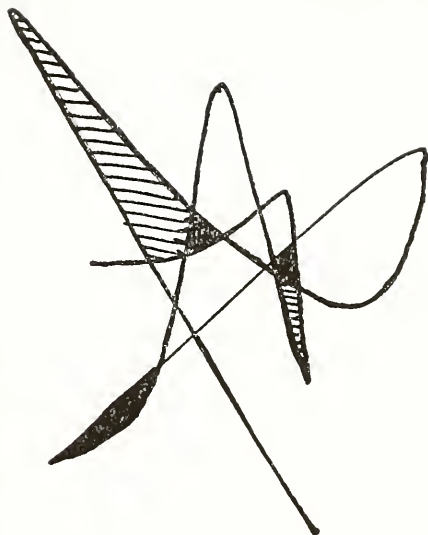
his whole body wiggled. The bird in his mouth was a third as big as he was. He looked a little like a clown bounding over the ground. There was suddenly a shot and Teapot jumped into the air. He fell and then dragged himself a few feet before he collapsed. Mr. Cooper ran to him and knelt there. His arms pulled the little dog up onto his lap. From the standing corn came a fat man, a city man. He carried his gun soldier style over his shoulder and shouted, "That damn dog. That's my bird he's got there." The gun club pins on his hat jingled with every step he took. He kept swearing and saying nasty things. Mr. Cooper looked up and his face was white with anger. I didn't hear what he said to the man because I saw Mr. Pendelton's black car coming down the road and I ran over to meet him. The rest of it I can only piece together because I was a girl and they made me stay in the car. But I did hear the fat man say he was only trying to scare poor Teapot with a little buckshot and he even offered to buy Mr. Cooper a new dog. Mr. Cooper just sat there and then he came over to the car and got a shovel out of the trunk. He took the shovel and his gun and Teapot to the top of the drain bank and started digging. When he finished he lay Teapot into the hole, dropped his duck strap in too and stood there holding his gun and looking at the fat man. I thought maybe he was going to shoot him but he didn't. He just looked at the man and down at his gun. He slowly took his gun apart and laid the stock and barrel into the hole with Teapot. He knelt there for a few minutes and then began pushing the dirt into the hole with his arms.

I climbed into the back seat because I didn't want to watch anymore. I can remember thinking how cold Teapot must be in that hole all by himself and I wondered if the corn husk was still hanging on his coat. The whole way back to town Mr. Cooper just sat and looked out at the dormant hop fields. Nobody said anything. It wasn't any fun even to ride in Mr. Pendelton's car with the radio and all. It was just cold and silent and dead. Everything had been spoiled by that man. He was horrible and I hated him. Mamma was right, a city man with a gun was bad. That was the only name that I could think of that fit him. City man, city man, city man.

ADELE SCOTT

The Guest

 TREAD gently down the hallway of my heart
And take the best chambers for your own
But leave me yet a little corner, apart,
 That I may sit
And ponder on the wonder
 of your visit.



MARY-LOU BURELLE

CANTOS ON EXPLORATION

I.

1492

THE MAN,
Christopher Columbus,
groped
in uncertainty over certain,
uncharted depths
of solid water.

A man,
an early pioneer in the field of
Search and Research—
gave to generations a mighty
continent,
and a District of Columbia,
and a Columbine.

II.

1776

Strong men
made a revolution.

Strong minds
explored liberty, independence
and autonomy—

Strong wills
of men who won everything
their revolution was for.

III.

1958

Our patient
is the Universe.

We have tired of
petty tinkering with
exasperating cadavers of
decaying civilizations.

We probe—and poke
expectantly, in the fluctuating
network of the living organism
to discover and explore the nucleus,
the beating Heart of things,
the key to the sprawling body Universe.

IV.

1984

Those

are the greyones.

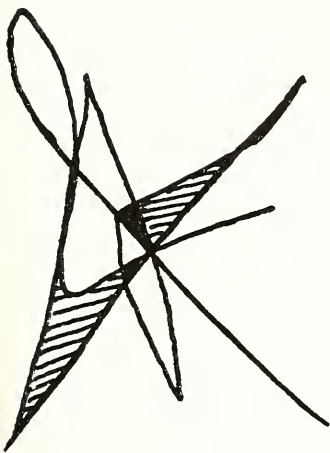
Those,
laid end to end, would
s-t-r-e-t-c-h in all directions—
confused: and compress conjointly,
crushed, subdued.

They exist: an amalgam,
a fusion, an omelet,
a composite of black, the no-color,
and white, the all-color,
to make grey, greycolored greyones.

They queue abjectly.
Does it matter?

They are automatons
forging chains, coiling,
twisting like writhing vipers
enveloping neurotic,
submissive humanity.

The ciphers are at work.



V.

1997

U. S. S. G.
"Union of Soviet Socialist Galaxies"
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(after the Revolution) under the
8th Five-Year-Satellite-Plan
by Laika IX.

VI.

2000

We overlook
the Heart
we seek
in corners of
the Universe.
We are but the skeleton of dust and clay,
with limbs of galaxies, trunk of planets,
and superficial skin of scattered stars.
The great
Heart throbs
unobserved
within.
It has been
there for
2000 years.

THE NEOPHYTE

THE black-backed fur on the cat
Stands up when I enter the room.
I tweaked too many hairs
From her tail the summer
I rode the vacuum cleaner and
Drew pentacles in colored chalk
On the toyroom floor.

I knew the ways to Watch-and-hold,
To Bind-and-tear and Turn-to-gold.
(More ritual than my parents knew
Accompanied the tooth beneath my pillow).

I made cats-cradles out of shoestrings and
Folded the napkins for the dinner table windershins.
Of course it was all bunk. And yet
Old Mr. Wilson who threw tin cans at us
Fell down and broke his leg.
And we had snow in June
With hailstones big as gopher's eggs.



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SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE, SWEET BRIAR VIRGINIA

VOLUME 35, No. 4

MAY, 1958

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SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE

SWEET BRIAR, VIRGINIA

MAY, 1958

The Brambler

SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE, SWEET BRIAR, VIRGINIA



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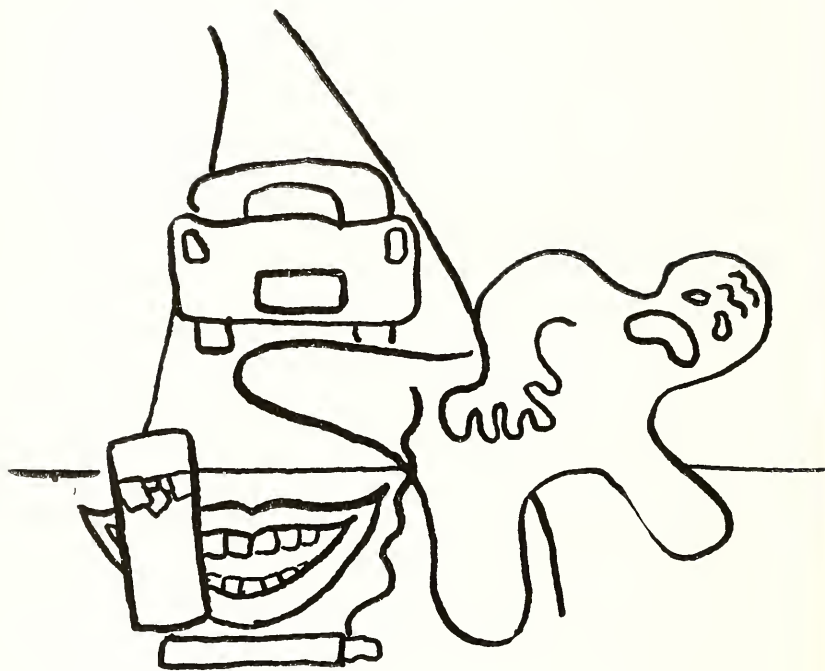
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Contributions may be submitted to the Editor at any time. They should be typed and must be signed. All manuscripts, whether or not they are accepted for publication, will be returned, with critical remarks at the writer's request, after the appearance of the issue for which they were submitted.



Where All Is Bright and Gay

WELL now, let me tell you about Sunday . . . Dave came over about noontime, which was pretty good since he probably started drinking again after he took me in Saturday night. I wore my new, grey tweed suit and those new, grey suede heels which I absolutely ruined—oh, I'll tell you about that when I get to it. Well anyway, we were in pretty bad form, both shot and neither one of us could bear the thought of breakfast, so we went over to the House and mixed up a batch of sours. Needless to say, we felt infinitely better after a few swallows. The place was deserted, only a few pledges were wandering around—oh, you know how it is on an off-weekend with nothing planned, nothing going on. I guess you really have to like your date to be able to tolerate Sundays. Well, we didn't feel like listening to HI-FI all day, and it was so lovely out that we decided to drive out to the races at L_____. Have you ever been out there for the Meet? Well, it's very interesting—until the second race and then it's just the same, old, boring thing all over again. I mean, I love to go to the races, but where there's a track, where there's a grandstand, a bar, stables, and something organized. But there, you just stand around and if you happen to turn your head at the right moment, you might see horses going over a brush jump and if you run fast enough, you might see them coming down the home stretch. But god knows, I didn't feel like running around all day—I wasn't racing, so I just had to explain to Dave that I thought it was all very lovely being in the country and everything, but if he didn't mind, I'd just like to stay in one spot and watch from there. Of course he couldn't have been sweeter: he just smiled, nodded, and asked if I'd like my drink freshened. Oh, guess who we saw there! Remember Chas Phelps? Well, he was there with an absolute pig from god knows where. I wonder what Laura will think of that? Of course I'm not going to tell her, don't be silly. I asked Dave about it later, but he didn't know anything about them. Anyway, the damn races were infinite! Of course I was so bored that I couldn't allow the ice to melt in my cup. Chatted with an awful lot of Dave's friends—can't remember what about, doubt if they can either. Miraculously, the event ended just as the sun started to go down. Oh, I was so cold and

depressed by that time! I had no feeling in my feet or my hands. I just wanted to get back to town and sit in some nice, warm place, have a nice dinner, and a nice, civilized drink in a glass, not in a paper cup with everything that floats around in the country air floating on top of my bourbon. Dave finally gave the word: I was overjoyed. I just followed him meekly. That's when I walked right into a swamp of that damn, red, Virginian mud and sank my entire heel in the stuff—of course my shoe was just ruined, completely ruined. I was livid, and then to make matters worse, just before we got to where the car was parked, Dave stumbled on this old man lying out in the grass who was obviously just plain drunk. Well, I don't know, maybe Dave thought he'd had a heart attack or something, anyway he decided to befriend him. That was the crowning blow: this really wrecked my day completely! Dave finally managed to get the old man to his feet. No, he wasn't a tramp: he had on a suit and tie. You could tell they were old, but you could also see that they had been pressed and mended. The leather at the toes of his shoes was cracked, but his shoes were polished. Probably just some local old man who considered the races the big event of the year, came out ahead in his betting, and just overdid his celebrating a bit. Dave tried to ask him where he lived, but the old man just kept repeating "about two miles down the road." Dave said that we just couldn't leave him lying there, because pretty nearly everyone had left and probably no one else would pick him up. If we left him, he'd probably just have passed out again to sleep it off until morning; and being the nights get pretty cold this time of year and being an old man, he would be quite susceptible to pneumonia or what have you.

So we loaded the old man into the car. I sat in the back, I wanted no part of him. Dave began asking him where he lived and he answered that he'd give directions as we went along. He began to sober up and began to ask Dave where he went to school and all those questions old people always ask. Then he started to go into this business about his son who has a football scholarship to a big, midwestern University—How would I know if it was true or not? That's just what he told us—and how this son never wrote and never came to see him anymore and how Dave should remember to write his parents and not forget to visit them on holidays. Well, I began to feel sorry for the old man, but then he started to swear. Dave told him to please watch it because there was a lady etc. in the car, but the old man wouldn't stop and he kept cursing his son and then began cursing Dave. Dave started to get angry—I can't blame him, he was doing this old man a favor—and started yelling at the old man, demanding to know where he lived. The old man said he'd tell him after Dave got him a drink. Then Dave started to swear and said that he'd better tell him where the hell he lived or else he'd leave him right on the god damn highway. Well of course I didn't say anything, I didn't want Dave screaming at me too. All of a sudden, the old man told Dave to take a right. Dave slammed on his brakes and asked if that was the way to his house. The old man said no, but that was where you could get a drink on Sundays. I thought Dave was going to hit the old man: I guess the old man thought so too, because he gave us a new set of directions. We followed them and came to this unpainted house off a side road. You could see someone lived there because there were clean, white curtains in all of the windows. When we drove up, a little beagle puppy came running out from under the porch, barking and wagging its tail. It's amazing how even the poorest people in Virginia seem to have dogs with a lot of good blood in them: this was really

a smart-looking little dog. Anyway, we asked the old man if he lived there, and he said he did. Dave honked the horn, but no one came out of the house and the beagle only barked louder. Dave got out of the car, went around to the other side, opened the door, pulled the old man out, and said that he'd washed his hands of him. The old man begged to be taken someplace where he could get a drink. Dave told him to be serious. As Dave was getting back in the car on his side, the old man started to open the door, begging all the while for a drink. Dave reached over and slammed the door shut. The old man just stood there. Dave started to put the car in gear when the old man said very slowly, very softly, "I think my hand is caught in your door, would you open it please, sir?" Dave opened the door and the man pulled out his bloody, mangled hand. I thought I would vomit. Dave slammed the car in reverse and tore out of there like a bat out of hell. I looked back and saw the old man still standing there, mumbling over his hand, the little beagle barking and jumping around him. Dave told me not to worry, because the man probably was in the state of shock or else so liquored up that he wouldn't feel anything until he woke up in the morning when someone would be sure to find him. I agreed with Dave, and told him there was nothing else he could have done, that he had done enough already, and that the old man deserved it for being so ungrateful. Then I suggested that there was still some ice left in the cooler and would he like me to mix a round of drinks. All through dinner I kept seeing the old man and that beagle pup and when I came back to school, I really was sick. And the whole affair just ruined my entire Sunday.

POLLY BENSON

Today, Other Directed

THE wind suddenly comes up,
Polishing the sky with
A dirty scrap of cloud.
The huddled loneliness of rain
Is replaced by the gregarious sun
Which dismisses any need
For damp protective coverings.



SARAH FOSTER

JOURNEY INTO THE FOURTH DIMENSION

I SHALL fly
beyond
my shadow
past
these thousand things
bound
from
songless earth
earthen people
the pinion of petty self
beyond
the mordant moon
laughing at lithic man
through chain-stitched clouds
sewn tight on a cerement sky
to
far.

The Pawns

WE WERE playing chess again. I hated to play with Mechnikov. He was such a bad chess player. He had no conception of finesse, no idea that there was anything more to the game than winning. A pawn's move had no beauty for him unless it produced direct results.

He was a dark man, powerful in his loins and shoulders, with hands that moved the pieces carelessly. Of those of us who were left, he was in the best physical condition. His play was always the offensive. It was as though he were attempting to convert his bodily strength into mental strategy against the bishops, rooks, and pawns of his opponent's color. He was a stupid, savage man, and as I watched him sacrifice his own rook to capture an impotent pawn, I would rather have played with any other man there.

It was very quiet when we played. The blankets stuffed around the window kept in the light of the lantern, a curious affair fashioned by Mechnikov with his great fists out of a stolen coffee pot. The manes of our knights quivered in the glim flicker from the grease, hoarded drippings from our meat served to us once a week in the same scrub bucket that brought our morning gruel. It was close and stuffy in the hutch. Even the bishops' mouths gaped, gasping for air.

As I waited for him to move, I could not keep my eyes from Mechnikov's blunt fingers. They hovered over the board, almost touching one piece, then the other. Once he touched one, he had to move it, so he deliberated slowly, growling deep in his chest and lowering at my pitiful forces.

It was so quiet that this time we heard the police dog's toenails clicking on the cement before he had rounded the corner. It was the ten-thirty patrol. They checked us every forty-five minutes. Dmitri blew out the light.

I could feel them sitting there in the darkness. Their physical presence was more than the closeness of the room. The guard's torch beam swept over the window and paused for a long moment under the door. Then it flicked off and we could hear him stamping away no longer caring if we heard or not.

Dmitri lit the grease wick again. Matches were the only implements we had that were plentiful. The guards were careless about throwing away half empty books. They liked to see us fight, and they threw cigarette butts at us to start quarrels. We always made a pretense of squabbling over them, though everything we got we had to turn over to Nikolai. He was our leader.

Mechnikov had moved in the darkness. It was a stupid move, for instead of retreating and so putting my queen in check he had taken a pawn and was holding it in his hand under the table.

I attacked his rook's pawn four with the queen and prepared to jump to checkmate. The others were watching us. All except Misha, poor insane Misha. He huddled in his blanket all the time now, babbling to himself and patting his cheeks with thin scrawny hands. He was thirteen years old.

I tried to concentrate on sitting loosely, glancing at the floor. Beside me Nikolai stood in watchful tenseness. Mechnikov's finger paused over his rook's pawn, and a tiny muscle in Nikolai's hand relaxed. He had given it away, and Mechnikov moved out of check. Serezha's face flushed angrily. He was an old man and quick-tempered, but he saw more than Nikolai did. He calmed down when Dmitri patted his arm.

Dmitri was our youngest next to Misha. His innocence was incredible. With his grave eyes he was more like a child than a man. While we all played chess he sometimes crawled onto the bunk with Misha and held him while he told him stories. Yet for all his innocence and naivete, Dmitri knew how to play chess. He was the only one who had any sense of the rhythm of the moves. He looked at me sympathetically and grimaced, not because Nikolai had ruined the play but because I had lost a chance to end it.

I could feel Nikolai's silent approval as I did the next best thing and jumped my knight deep into Mechnikov's territory. A strategist to the bone, Nikolai played chess as on a battlefield. His play was full of military tactics, and he liked to send his knights on swift reconnaissance behind the lines. He would dash in with a bishop to secure an isolated pawn, then dash back again, or sweep his queen from across the board to cut off a retreat. He made his moves quickly, boldly. A game with Nikolai took half the usual time.

Time—we had forgotten the time. The eleven-fifteen watch was around the corner and passing the window before we heard him. He must have seen the lantern go out because he took a long time to move on. Dmitri was too close to the door and the police dog could smell him under the crack. It snuffled horribly, and pressed close to the door. When the man jerked it away it growled viciously. Even the guards were afraid of the dogs.

This time the first watch was not alone. A second guard was only about a hundred yards behind him.

Dmitri's match misfired and someone brushed by me from behind to catch his arm. I couldn't hear anything in the dark. When the guard had gone, Gorki took the matches from Dmitri. He held the match for a long time against the wick. We could smell his fingers burning but still he didn't let go until Misha saw him and whimpered.

"Quiet, little one," Gorki whispered. It was the first any of us had spoken since the lights out siren. He pulled the blanket around Misha and straightened him out in the bunk, holding him down gently until he lay quiet. Misha shivered when Gorki's hands touched him. We were all afraid of Gorki.

He had been captured in the early winter when the fighting was fiercest. For a long while, maybe two months, nothing had happened. Then they came and took him away in the small antiseptically white building that was never out of sight of any corner of the prison camp. It was the interrogation building, and not many men came back from it.

Gorki did. They brought him back in a basket. Mechnikov wanted to kill him, but Nikolai said no. It would have meant the loss of a food ration. Dmitri cared for him that winter. Old Serezha set his bones as best he could and wiped his sores with an ointment boiled out of vegetables from our soup. I taught him chess.

I taught him chess, but I could never beat him. We always ended in a draw. He would be cut down until only his king was left, but somehow he maneuvered into a stalemate. It was uncanny how he could guess your moves and trap you into the wrong position. We felt as if he knew what we were thinking. We were afraid of Gorki. He knew what the guards were thinking too. He had known the second guard would be there.

My attention jerked back to the board. Mechnikov had not moved, but Gorki's ministerings to Misha had broken the tension, and Serezha nudged him sharply.

"Get on with it," he said.

Mechnikov snarled. He moved the queen's pawn to the queen's five.

Nikolai motioned to the others and drew them around him into a corner. It was eleven-thirty in the camp now, and a lapse in guard stations would leave us free until nearly one. This was the only safe time to talk. One of the men in our hutch belonged in the next building, but under the "exchange system" he had been switched with one of our men in the exercise yard. We did this every night because it kept us in touch with the other prisoners in the camp and confused the guards.

Now the exchangee, a small nervous man named Stepon, was whispering quickly to Nikolai. I tried to listen while I responded to Mechnikov with the bishop's pawn to the bishop's three. Then as I realized what he was saying I lost all interest in the game.

The night before, three men from hutch twenty-one had been shot while trying to cut the electrical cable that serviced the alarm system. We had not expected any retributive action until the next day because we knew the Commandant was absent from the camp. But the Adjutant had decided to act on his own authority. The exchangee told us that one man in every third hutch would be executed at twelve o'clock midnight.

We were hutch eighteen. One of us would die in less than a half hour.

The waiting was very hard. Old Serezha cried a little, softly so as not to disturb us. I prayed it would not be me. Dmitri patted me on the arm. "It will not be you," he said. Gorki smiled.

They came at ten minutes to twelve. We could hear them march into the area. They went to the first hutches, then number nine, then twelve, then us.

The door opened and the search light caught us with our eyes shut, our heads turned away. Don't look at him, I told myself. Don't look at him and he won't choose you. Don't look at him. Don't—don't.

The darkness was cool and unbelievable. I clutched my arms, my shoulders to be sure it was all right. Someone tore the blanket from the window. Outside in the recreation area seven men stood in a huddle, blinking in the searchlight. There was a sharp staccato rattle, and they oozed against each other, sliding soundless to the ground. One man wasn't quite dead. He struggled to his knees and crawled around to face them. It was Gorki. The rattle came again. We turned away.

Without the blanket across the window it was light enough to play chess. I looked down at the board. In a vulgar display of violence Mechnikov began wiping out my pawns.

NATURE PREFERRED

(SYMPOSIUM ATTENDED)

IN LATE WINTER, sunless mornings
Spread death through long, crawling trees.
Cobwebs dangle from branches
Coiled in lustreless circles
For bent, lame spiders to crawl on.

The hill is a skeleton
Shredding pink flesh from black bones
And the flesh drops evenly
Onto a ground of steaming ice.
The deep scars of the cracking earth
Hold drying blood, it freezes
In every pore and crevice.

The Dying cry to the wind,
Their static shriek is blown
By foul grindings
Of an old wandering organ.

The Dying curse, falling
Stumbling over bushes
On the tops of the lonely hills.



Night

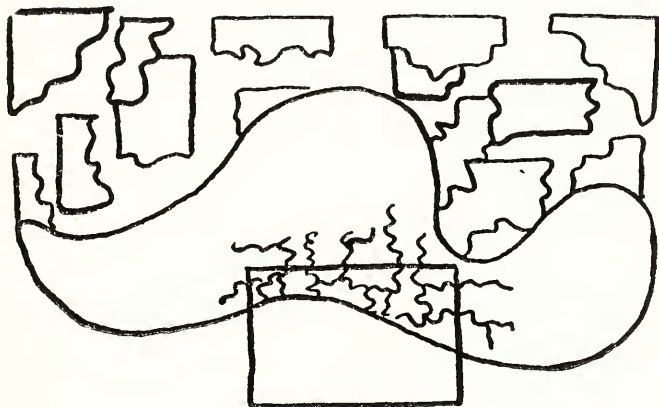
A STAR glimmers in space
Reflecting eternity in its light.

I feel part of the past,
Part of the sky,
As I wonder how many
Have stood with their senses tuned in
To unknown thoughts and vibrations.
I realize the enormity
And the littleness of myself
And question my experience and purpose.

To Hungarian Youth

YOU, over there—you need help. So do I.
Your lack is physical, more sharply felt
Than mine. My only disability
Is that I cannot come to you with help.

Come to me, and suffer me to give you
All that I own, which gladly I bestow;
Your act will be the saving of us both—
But why you must move first I do not know.



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